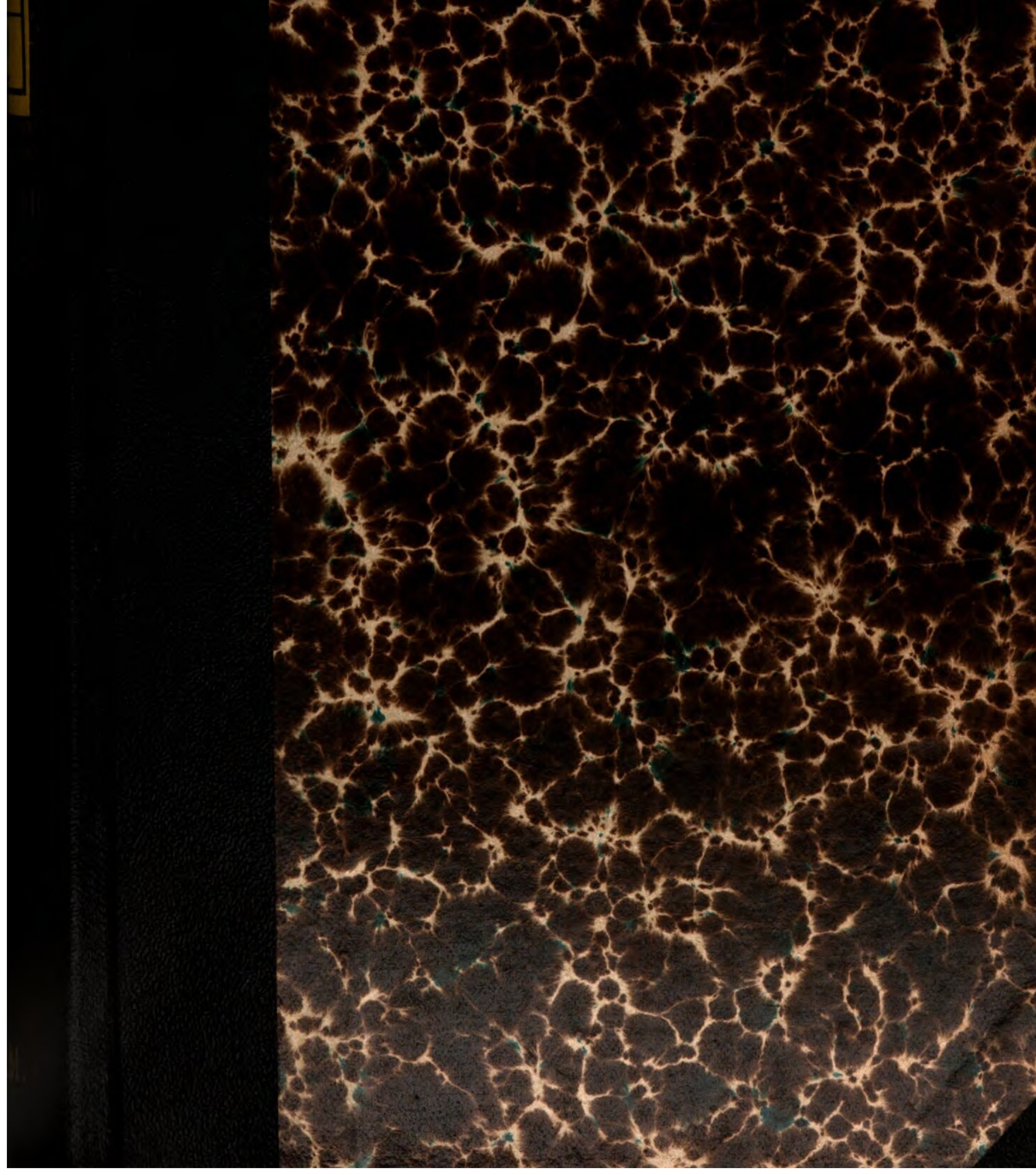




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VOL. 222.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS BY CHARLES DICKENS

VOL. 11.

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1852

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HOUSEHOLD WORDS

COLLECTION
OF
BRITISH AUTHORS

TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

VOL. 222.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS. BY CHARLES DICKENS.

VOL. XI.

COLLECTION

BRITISH AUTHORS

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HOUSHOLD W. O. DICKENS

VOL. XI

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

"Familiar in their Mouths as Household Words."
Shakespeare.

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VOL. XI.

LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1852.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

CONTENTS.

CHARLES DICKENS.

"Familiar in their mouths as household words."
—*Southey*



VOL. II.

LONDON.

EDWARD TAYLOR.

1852.

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HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS.

VOL. XI.

CHRISTMAS, 1851.

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What Christmas is to a Bunch of People.	What Christmas is after a Long Absence.
An Idyl for Christmas In-doors.	What Christmas is if you Outgrow it.
What Christmas is in Country Places.	The Round Game of the Christmas Bowl.
What Christmas is in the Company of John Doe.	

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS, AS WE GROW OLDER.

TIME was, with most of us, when Christmas Day encircling all our limited world like a magic ring, left nothing out for us to miss or seek; bound together all our home enjoyments, affections, and hopes; grouped every thing and every one around the Christmas fire; and made the little picture shining in our bright young eyes, complete.

Time came, perhaps, all so soon! when our thoughts overleaped that narrow boundary; when there was some one (very dear, we thought then, very beautiful, and absolutely perfect) wanting to the fulness of our happiness; when we were wanting too (or we

thought so, which did just as well) at the Christmas hearth by which that some one sat; and when we intertwined with every wreath and garland of our life that some one's name.

That was the time for the bright visionary Christmases which have long arisen from us to show faintly, after summer rain, in the palest edges of the rainbow! That was the time for the beatified enjoyment of the things that were to be, and never were, and yet the things that were so real in our resolute hope that it would be hard to say, now, what realities achieved since, have been stronger!

What! Did that Christmas never really come when we and the priceless pearl who was our young choice were received, after the

happiest of totally impossible marriages, by the two united families previously at daggers-drawn on our account? When brothers and sisters in law who had always been rather cool to us before our relationship was effected, perfectly doted on us, and when fathers and mothers overwhelmed us with unlimited incomes? Was that Christmas dinner never really eaten, after which we arose, and generously and eloquently rendered honour to our late rival, present in the company, then and there exchanging friendship and forgiveness, and founding an attachment, not to be surpassed in Greek or Roman story, which subsisted until death? Has that same rival long ceased to care for that same priceless pearl, and married for money, and become usurious? Above all, do we really know, now, that we should probably have been miserable if we had won and worn the pearl, and that we are better without her?

That Christmas when we had recently achieved so much fame; when we had been carried in triumph somewhere, for doing something great and good; when we had won an honoured and ennobled name, and arrived and were received at home in a shower of tears of joy; is it possible that *that* Christmas has not come yet?

And is our life here, at the best, so constituted that, pausing as we advance at such a noticeable milestone in the track as this great birthday, we look back on the things that never were, as natu-

rally and full as gravely as on the things that have been and are gone, or have been and still are? If it be so, and so it seems to be, must we come to the conclusion, that life is little better than a dream, and little worth the loves and strivings that we crowd into it?

No! Far be such mis-called philosophy from us, dear Reader, on Christmas Day! Nearer and closer to our hearts be the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness, and forbearance! It is in the last virtues especially, that we are, or should be, strengthened by the unaccomplished visions of our youth; for, who shall say that they are not our teachers to deal gently even with the impalpable nothings of the earth!

Therefore, as we grow older, let us be more thankful that the circle of our Christmas associations and of the lessons that they bring, expands! Let us welcome every one of them, and summon them to take their places by the Christmas hearth.

Welcome, old aspirations, glittering creatures of an ardent fancy, to your shelter underneath the holly! We know you, and have not outlived you yet. Welcome, old projects and old loves, however fleeting, to your nooks among the steadier lights that burn around us. Welcome, all that was ever real to our hearts; and for the earnestness that made you real, thanks to Heaven! Do we build no Christmas castles in

the clouds now? Let our thoughts, fluttering like butterflies among these flowers of children, bear witness! Before this boy, there stretches out a Future, brighter than we ever looked on in our old romantic time, but bright with honour and with truth. Around this little head on which the sunny curls lie heaped, the graces sport, as prettily, as airily, as when there was no scythe within the reach of Time to shear away the curls of our first-love. Upon another girl's face near it—placider but smiling bright—a quiet and contented little face, we see Home fairly written. Shining from the word, as rays shine from a star, we see how, when our graves are old, other hopes than ours are young, other hearts than ours are moved; how other ways are smoothed; how other happiness blooms, ripens, and decays—no, not decays, for other homes and other bands of children, not yet in being nor for ages yet to be, arise, and bloom and ripen to the end of all!

Welcome, everything! Welcome, alike what has been, and what never was, and what we hope may be, to your shelter underneath the holly, to your places round the Christmas fire, where what is sits open-hearted! In yonder shadow, do we see obtruding furtively upon the blaze, an enemy's face? By Christmas Day we do forgive him! If the injury he has done us may admit of such companionship, let him come here and take his place. If otherwise, unhappily, let him go hence, assured that

we will never injure nor accuse him.

On this day, we shut out Nothing!

"Pause," says a low voice. "Nothing? Think!"

"On Christmas Day, we will shut out from our fireside, Nothing."

"Not the shadow of a vast City where the withered leaves are lying deep?" the voice replies. "Not the shadow that darkens the whole globe? Not the shadow of the City of the Dead?"

Not even that. Of all days in the year, we will turn our faces towards that City upon Christmas Day, and from its silent hosts bring those we loved, among us. City of the Dead, in the blessed name wherein we are gathered together at this time, and in the Presence that is here among us according to the promise, we will receive, and not dismiss, thy people who are dear to us!

Yes. We can look upon these children angels that alight, so solemnly, so beautifully, among the living children by the fire, and can bear to think how they departed from us. Entertaining angels unawares, as the Patriarchs did, the playful children are unconscious of their guests; but we can see them—can see a radiant arm around one favourite neck, as if there were a tempting of that child away. Among the celestial figures there is one, a poor misshapen boy on earth, of a glorious beauty now, of whom his dying mother said it grieved her much to

leave him here, alone, for so many years as it was likely would elapse before he came to her — being such a little child. But he went quickly, and was laid upon her breast, and in her hand she leads him.

There was a gallant boy, who fell, far away, upon a burning sand beneath a burning sun, and said, "Tell them at home, with my last love, how much I could have wished to kiss them once, but that I died contented and had done my duty!" Or there was another, over whom they read the words, "Therefore we commit his body to the deep!" and so consigned him to the lonely ocean and sailed on. Or there was another who lay down to his rest in the dark shadow of great forests, and, on earth, awoke no more. O shall they not, from sand and sea and forest, be brought home at such a time!

There was a dear girl — almost a woman — never to be one — who made a mourning Christmas in a house of joy, and went her trackless way to the silent City. Do we recollect her, worn out, faintly whispering what could not be heard, and falling into that last sleep for weariness? O look upon her now! O look upon her beauty, her serenity, her changeless youth, her happiness! The daughter of Jairus was recalled to life, to die; but she, more blest, has heard the same voice, saying unto her, "Arise for ever!"

We had a friend who was our friend from early days, with whom

we often pictured the changes that were to come upon our lives, and merrily imagined how we would speak, and walk, and think, and talk, when we came to be old. His destined habitation in the City of the Dead received him in his prime. Shall he be shut out from our Christmas remembrance? Would his love have so excluded us? Lost friend, lost child, lost parent, sister, brother, husband, wife, we will not so discard you! You shall hold your cherished places in our Christmas hearts, and by our Christmas fires; and in the season of immortal hope, and on the birthday of immortal mercy, we will shut out Nothing!

The winter sun goes down over town and village; on the sea it makes a rosy path, as if the Sacred tread were fresh upon the water. A few more moments, and it sinks, and night comes on, and lights begin to sparkle in the prospect. On the hill-side beyond the shapelessly-diffused town, and in the quiet keeping of the trees that gird the village-steeple, remembrances are cut in stone, planted in common flowers, growing in grass, entwined with lowly brambles around many a mound of earth. In town and village, there are doors and windows closed against the weather, there are flaming logs heaped high, there are joyful faces, there is healthy music of voices. Be all ungentleness and harm excluded from the temples of the Household Gods, but be those remembrances admitted with tender encourage-

ment! They are of the time and all its comforting and peaceful re-assurances; and of the history that reunited even upon earth the living and the dead; and of the broad beneficence and goodness that too many men have tried to tear to narrow shreds.

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS TO A BUNCH OF PEOPLE.

THE FATHER OF A FAMILY rubs his hands with a genial smile when Christmas comes; and yet he now and then raises one finger to the calculating "organ" of his cranium with rather a thoughtful air, suggestive of certain bills and taxes, which he is resolved shall not weigh upon his mind. Why should they? He will get through his Christmas bills somehow or other, as he has done before. He has no doubt of being able to muster the money to "article" his eldest son to a highly respectable solicitor; he has already laid up a small portion for his eldest daughter, and makes pretty sure of doing as much for the others by the time they are old enough to be married. He has a good business; his wife is a clever manager; they live happily together; the holly-berries smile at him with the well-remembered sparkle of early days; he therefore determines to enjoy the merry season as of old. What if he *does* see half-a-dozen more grey hairs displaying themselves, as though to remind him that another year

has passed, and a certain line or two in his face *does* look a trifle deeper than when he had last observed it? What have such small matters to do with the real age of a man? A man is as old as he feels, and no more. The fact is, the Father of a Family is as young as he was twenty years ago; so he gives his hair an additional and rather flourishing touch with a comb, puts on a new waistcoat, brushes the collar of his coat, and, looking down with complacency on his boots as he sets his hat lightly upon his head, sallies out upon the landing-place, and shouts a jaunty inquiry as to when his wife and daughter will be ready to go to church. The boys are gone on before. Meanwhile he stands thrumming a pleased, but impatient, tattoo with his fingers upon the banisters, and inhaling every now and then a savoury whiff of sweet herbs rising up from the kitchen.

THE MOTHER OF A FAMILY has a world of anxious thoughts about her. She likes Christmas; it is, no doubt, a pleasant time; there are many sweet memories and hopes attending it, and altogether it must be considered as happy: but the butcher's bill, she knows, must be heavy — the baker's too — and as for the grocer's, she is almost afraid to think of it. Besides this, there is a new dress-maker's bill, which she has not yet told Mr. Broadback about. But how was all this to be avoided? As to herself, she could not do with less, nor

her eldest daughter, especially on the eve of her marriage — a happy marriage she most devoutly hopes it will be. Then there are the growing girls, all of whose dresses have got so shockingly short, that she could almost wish the follies of Bloomerism had been softened and translated, and entered England under another character — as a Persian, Turkish, or Polish ladies' "fashions," just imported from Paris — so that something economically elegant might have gradually been introduced, inch by inch, as it were, to the great saving of the Mothers of large families of daughters. As for the bonnet-maker, she *must* wait. It is unknown what sums have been paid that bonnet-maker in the course of the last six years. Perhaps it would be best not to think any more of these matters just at present. At any rate, Mr. Broadback shall have a good Christmas dinner; she will take care of that; and all their relations and friends who are invited shall be made as happy as possible.

THE ELDEST SON has a mixed feeling about Christmas. He has no very romantic impressions of the study of the Law; but he wishes to begin life, and to take the first step towards making his way in the world; and as he is to be articled to Mr. Benjamin Sheepskin early in January, he looks upon the intermediate time rather impatiently. At least he would do so, but that his cousin Ellen is to dine with them on Christmas-day, and stay on a visit

for a week afterwards, during which there will be round games and forfeits, and he will "go partners" with his cousin, and dance with her, and show her all his law-books, and decoy her under the mistletoe-bough; and so he expects to pass a very merry time before he goes to the office of Mr. Sheepskin.

What Christmas is to THE ELDEST DAUGHTER, we may pretty well infer from the increased brightness in her eyes, the frequent blush that suffuses her soft cheeks, the occasional pensive air suddenly awakening up with a smile, the tender sigh, and the additional pains she takes with her beautiful hair, which is never out of order, and yet she thinks it continually needs to be brushed and smoothed, and set to rights. To her, Christmas evidently comes with a wedding-ring concealed in a wreath of evergreen.

Besides the eldest son, there are "THE BOYS;" and these rollicking young chaps are home for the holidays; and Christmas to them is (weather permitting) an endless succession of sliding and snowballs, and hoops, and going on the ice; and plum-puddings, and mince-pies, and games at blind-man's-buff, and other romps in the evening, with snap-dragon after supper.

To THE YOUNGEST CHILD — a little bright-eyed fairy of five years old, in a white and sky-blue frock, purple sash, and red shoes — Christmas is a season of romance.

It is a whirl of shining hours, in which there are new toys of mysterious beauty, and dances, and kisses, and cakes of all sorts, and sweet meats, and wonderful things made of painted sugar, and all the creatures of the earth, with Noah's Ark in the middle, and brothers and sisters, and playmates, the eldest of whom is not yet "gone eight" — spoken of, like a little clock! — and Mamma in a new dress, shining with bracelets, and a chain and things; and dear Auntie with a busy face making something nice to eat; and loud shouting and crowding round a Christmas tree, all of green and gold, with lights; and glittering presents of priceless value dangling from every twig, and hidden in deep green recesses of the boughs. This is the true Fairyland we have all read so much about!

But THE MAIDEN AUNT, she who so continually sits on one side, out of the way, or in the quiet shade of a corner — she who is so continually forgotten, except when some kind assistance is needed — shall we, too, forget her? Far from it. We well know what Christmas is to her. All her life is devoted to amiable disinterested acts of practical aid to all in the house who need it; and the period of Christmas, to her, is the summing up of a year's account of sympathies and kindly offices, of which she herself takes no note beyond the moment, and which have no place in her memory except to cause a sigh of regret

when any gentle service has not effected all the good she intended.

What Christmas is to THE OLD HOUSEKEEPER of a substantial family, more wealthy than the one just described, we must all see at once to be a very serious business indeed; — complicated, and full of grave cares, packages of hope, close-covered preparations, and spicy responsibilities. There she stands, with her tortoise-shell spectacles, and a great bunch of keys dangling over her white apron! No minister of State thinks more of herself (Heaven forgive us! — himself) than this old lady does. Her "linen closet" is a model of neatness and order; her "china closet" is set out with the utmost precision, and not without an eye to effect in the prominent display on the highest shelves of the choice old china-bowls, basins, tea-cups, saucers, and an immensely ancient tea-pot of the ugliest shape imaginable, and covered with very ugly faded paintings, of great value. But most of all is her pride and importance in the house, and in her own self-esteem, displayed when she unlocks and opens the door of her "store-room." No one must enter but the Housekeeper herself. You may stand outside, and lean round the sides of the open door, and peep in — but no more. There, you see large tea-canisters of different sizes — and coffee-canisters — and dark slate-blue paper bags — and polished wooden spice-boxes, tall, and round, and unscrewing

in several places — and boxes of raisins, and a fig-drum, and many packets of different sizes, with a large white cone of loaf-sugar standing in the midst — (we think the Youngest Child of this family really *must* be allowed to come in, and look about, but not touch anything) — and light bundles of dry herbs hanging from nails, and small baskets attached to hooks, and half a German sausage, besides three Bath chaps swinging by short strings from nails on the edge of the top shelf; while, ranged along the shelves, the Child sees a beautiful array of white jam-pots and preserve pots, and brown pickle jars, and wide-necked glass bottles full of deep-coloured cherries, and preserved gooseberries, plums, apricots, and other fruits — with honey-jars, and tamarind-jars; and beneath each shelf, a range of drawers with brass handles, labelled outside with the names of all the nicest, and some of the most mysterious, things, in the eatable world.

What this period of the year is to THE GARDENER, we may easily guess, from great arms-full of mistletoe boughs, of holly-boughs thick with berries, and of branches of laurel which he is continually carrying into the house, or going with as a present to neighbouring houses. And now, see him coming along with a bending back, bearing an entire fir-tree, which gracefully nods its head as he slowly trudges along, and shakes and rustles all its dry brown cones, as if in dumb anticipation of the peals of bells

that will shortly be rung! This fir is for the Christmas Tree — the green and simple foundation and superstructure, which is shortly destined to sustain so much brightness and romance, so many glittering presents, and to be the medium of so many sweet feelings, joyous hopes, and tender sense of childhood — in present bright visions around us, and in tender recollections of the past.

As for THE NURSE, there can be no doubt but Christmas is a very anxious time for *her*. She expects so many of the young folks will make themselves very ill with all this quantity of plum-pudding, and plum-cake, and mince-pies. However, she consoles herself, on the whole, for any extra trouble she may have in pouring out, or mixing and stirring wine-glasses of physic, and trying to conceal powders in honey or red-currant jelly (and then getting them *down*!) by the proud recollection that she had the lady of the house in her arms when a child; and this consciousness makes her feel of the highest importance in the family.

But THE DOCTOR — the medical attendant of the family — there are no mixed feelings or misgivings in his mind. He hears of all the preparations — all the nice things — and shakes his head gravely at the lady of the house; but the instant he is outside the door, he hurries homeward, rubbing his knuckles. *He knows!*

The black coat of THE VICAR has a richer and more prominent

tone of black, as he walks across the broad snow of his seven-acre field, towards the stile that leads into the lane that runs to the vestry-door of the church. The snow-covered hedges, with frosted twigs at top, nod and glisten to him as he moves briskly onward, pointing his Church-and-stately black toe along the narrow path, beside the deep cart-rut, with its rough and jagged ridges. Christmas to him is a series of dinners, and "offerings," and good things, and compliments, and wedding fees, and burial fees, and christening fees, and charity sermons, exhorting the rich to remember the poor, and exhorting the poor to be meek and contented, and trust to Providence. Meantime, THE CURATE goes to tea-parties, and has a great deal to do in the details of Church business affairs, as the vestries are often very troublesome; and has much to do in visiting the sick, and administering religious consolation, and riding on horseback to do double duty — morning service, here — afternoon, there — evening service, here again, or somewhere else. This is the ordinary, regular, hard-working, useful Curate; but if he be a spruce young Puseyite Curate, in a black silk sacerdotal dress-waistcoat, with a narrow, stiff white neck-tie, and a black superfine frock-coat, cut to the quick — then, he very often rivals the Vicar in his dinner-parties, and gives him the "go-by" in evening-parties, where he clean carries off most of the young ladies

for a little intense talk of divine things, in one corner of the room.

If Christmas be a great fact to THE BEADLE, the Beadle seems a greater fact to Christmas. New broad-cloth — new scarlet and gold — new gold-laced cocked hat, of old Lord Mayor fashion — new gold-headed cane — no wonder that all the little charity boys eye his inflated presence with additional awe! No wonder that it is inflated; for he is swollen with the substantial comforts derived from all the great kitchens in the neighbourhood. There is a roasted ox in his mind. He can never forget the year when one was roasted whole upon the ice, and *he* present, and allowed to take his turn with the basting-ladle. It was the epic event of his life.

The Beadle is generally able to frown the charity boys into awe and silence; assisting the said frown, every now and then, with a few cuts of a long yellow twining cane, during service; whereby, amidst the sonorous tones of the preacher, there often breaks out a squealing cry from the hollow and remote aisles, or distant rows of heads in the organ loft, to the great injury of the eloquence of the pastor, and the gravity of the junior portion of his congregation.

But though this parish Terror of the Poor has portentous frowns for most of those under his dominion, he knows how to patronise with a smile, and his rubicund beams, at all seasons of festival, and more especially at Christ-

mas, fall encouragingly upon all the cooks of the best houses round about. Perhaps, upon the chief Bell-ringer—perhaps, we may say, upon *all* the bell-ringers—and now and then upon the Sexton, with whom he does a little private business, in the way of gratuities from mourning relatives who come to visit graves. But as for the Pew-opener, envy of her gains at Christmas, and her obduracy in concealing their extent, renders him a foe to her existence, and haughtily unconscious of her presence as often as he can affect not to see her. There was, once upon a time, a good Beadle, who married a Pew-opener—but it was a long while ago—so long, that it is thought to have been in the good old—&c.

Christmas is not what it was to the POSTMAN. The Government has interfered sadly with his collection of “boxes” from house to house; so that now he only receives gratefully a shilling, here and there, in streets where formerly he had but to announce, after a loud double-rap, that “the Postman has called for his Christmas-box!” and down came the shilling, almost as a lawful right. He looks melancholy as he sits on the bench outside a country public-house; and when the Landlord inquires the cause, he hints at the altered times. But he does not get much sympathy in this quarter; for THE PUBLICAN feels that the alteration is considerably in his favour. He has had a new beer-machine for his bar, all beautiful with inlaid

brass and ivory; he has added a wing to his house, and he feels a proud consciousness that, if all his town relations live in “palaces,” he is quite as important to the sinners, his subjects, in the country.

To the CATTLE-DROVER this is a season of arduous business, by day and by night, urging his fatigued and often refractory beasts along the dark roads; and when they enter among the many lights and glare of London, as they sometimes do in the evening, what Christmas is to the poor cattle, as well as the men, may be conjectured; and all things considered, one may fairly say the oxen have the worst of it. THE SHEPHERD who is driving a flock of sheep to the Christmas market, seldom sees much amusement by the way; events with him are rare; but the journey of the PIG-DROVERS up to town is always a “chequered” history. One pig or another is sure to be of an original turn of mind, and several are sure to follow his example for a little while, and then branch off into a line of conduct suited exclusively to their own individuality: under cart-wheels, dodging round pumps, hiding noses behind tree-trunks in the country, and behind theatrical boards in the front of town shops; rushing into hedges, and round haystacks, as the drove moves unwillingly along lanes and roads; and into wine-cellars, and round lamp-posts, and up “all manner of streets” in London. THE TURKEY-DROVER has also a

very busy time of it just now; and the GOOSE-DROVER far more. The greater difficulty attending the flocks of geese is not because they are so much more numerous than the turkeys, as on account of the perverse, irritable, and stupid conditions of mind which alternate with the goose. It is to be remembered that the warlike turkey-cock (so aptly called in Scotland the *bubbly-jock*) and the mature fierce-necked, wing-threatening, universally - assaulting gander, being preserved by their toughness, are not present in these festive processions. We speak only of the young and middle-aged turkey and goose; but while we give the degree of difficulty in their safe-conduct very much to the side of the latter, we are almost disposed to agree with the eminent poet, who has sung its praises in another sense, finely combining with that praise a kind of hint at a moral justification for its death:

"Of all the fowls that stock the farm,
The Goose must be preferred;
There is so much of nutriment
In that weak-minded bird."

Christmas to THE BUTCHER is nothing less than a bazaar of fine meat, displayed with all the elegancies (they are not numerous) of which his craft is susceptible. With a smiling countenance and ruddy cheek he walks backwards and forwards, through his shop all hung with choice specimens of last year's "grass"—the sun gleaming across them by day, and the gas shining at night upon the po-

lished surfaces, and delicate white fat, and sparkling amidst the branches of holly, stuck about in all directions. He very much approves of the vigorous way in which one of his men continues to bawl in a sharp quick tone "now then, t'buy! t'buy!" when the most unlikely people, or when no people at all, are passing. It all looks like business and bustle.

THE BAKER stands amidst his walls of loaves, built up, shelf upon shelf, — with other shelves packed close with quartern and half-quartern paper-bags of flour, — and he glances from the topmost tier down to the flour-whitened trap-door in one corner of his shop-floor, wherefrom appears an ascending tray, heaped up with long French rolls, cottage-loaves, twists, rusks, and hot-spiced gingerbread-nuts. This loaded tray continues to rise upon a man's head, which is gradually followed by his body, and the whole structure approaching the counter is speedily unloaded. In less than half an hour, all that was thus brought from below has disappeared; the walls of loaves have diminished in great gaps; more loaves come smoking in, to supply their places, and more trays of rolls, twists, gingerbread-nuts, and fancy bread, with piles of biscuits, ascend through the trap-door. The Baker has a nice-looking daughter (as most bakers in England have), and she now comes in smiling, and displaying a row of pearly teeth, and assists in taking money. They both agree

that although summer has its advantages, there is no time of the year so pleasant as Christmas.

THE GROCER is one of the most flourishing men in all the world at this season. His shop is a small and over-crowded epitome of the produce of the East. He is evidently in constant correspondence with China, has the most "friendly relations" in India, is on familiar terms with the Spice Islands, has confidential friends in Egypt, Barbary, and on "Candy's shore;" while, as to Jamaica, and other West India Islands, he has a box, a cask, or a case, by every post, to say nothing of Arabia, France, Greece, Spain, Italy, and, in fine, all the trading ports of the Mediterranean Sea. To the Grocer we may fairly say that Christmas is a general shaking by the hand, with fingers extremely sticky, of foreign relations and agents in every country, whence something good to eat, in the shape of dried fruits, spices, teas, coffees, sugars, preserves and condiments, are possible to be procured. If he has a newly-arrived Chinese picture, inlaid caddy, monster idol, or teapot, now is his time to make a feature of it in his window!

THE GREEN-GROCER is a genuine Englishman; he cannot boast of the foreign commodities of the tea-and-sugar mountebank over the way. He has no wish to do it. He deals entirely in home produce. All that he sells, is the natural result of the cultivation of the soil of his native country: from celery, beetroot, sea-kale,

and cabbage-sprouts, to Jerusalem artichokes and sage and onions. All of English growth! He could very easily hollow out a turnip; cut eyes, nose, and mouth in it; stick a bit of candle inside; and then set it up for a "show," all among the endive and parsley, in the middle of his window on Christmas Eve; but he scorns all such attempts to attract public attention. It may be very well for the Grocer over the way; but that sort of thing won't do for a man who deals in natural greens!

Christmas, to THE PASTRYCOOK, is the season when the human mind, if well regulated, is chiefly occupied in the contemplation of mince-pies. Also in eating them, and decidedly in paying for them. But a very large consumption of holiday plum-cakes is not the less expected by the patriotic pastrycook. There is another yet greater event in his mind, though he does not break ground with this till after Christmas Day; and that is, the advance of Twelfth Night. While, therefore, he expects the public to be solely occupied with mince-pies and other seasonable matters, he is secretly at work in the production of a full set (we forget how many he told us made a set) of the richest and most elaborately decorated and "dramatised" Twelfth Cakes which the juvenile world of England has ever yet beheld. The man's half crazy. His wife says he gets no sleep with thinking of his cakes. The other night he started up in bed, and cried out "Sugar-frost

and whitening!" till his nightcap stood on end. Though why on earth — as the good lady remarked, on second thoughts, "he should talk of whitening, she couldn't form the remotest idea in life!"

No doubt Christmas is the season which calls forth the most unmitigated hatred of poachers in the breast of the patriotic POULTERER. He says they are pests of society, and the wickedest men going. There is no excuse for strong fellows leading an idle life, as most of the poachers do. It is worse than idle; he calls it thievish and villanous. *He* would be the last man in all England to encourage such doings. On the contrary, he would show them no mercy. Every manjack of them that could be caught, he would send for two or three days to hard work on Primrose Hill. After this they would become better and wiser men; more industrious, more cautious; not so full of talk in beer-houses; more punctual and reliable; altogether more useful members of society. But as for his show of hares and other game, this Christmas, he will warrant every one, as having been honestly come by, and duly paid for, and not too "high" for immediate eating. What a capital show he makes this year! One hundred and twenty long-legs (as he familiarly calls the hares), three hundred rabbits, fifty brace of pheasants, ninety brace of "birds," twenty brace of woodcocks, thirty brace of snipe, a hundred and fifty

brace of pigeons, two hundred turkeys, three hundred geese, with wild ducks, tame ducks, and barn-door fowls innumerable! The inside of his shop is full in every corner; from countless hooks, hang rows of turkeys by the necks, and long double chains of sausages and rows of ducks, and rows of fowls, all dangling by the necks, too, and in full feather; while his shelves present compact arrays of fowls plucked and trussed, and powdered, and blown up in the breast with a blow-pipe: their livers and gizzards tucked neatly, like opera-hats, under their pinions. Rows of them, also, like small batteries, front the street. The outside of his house, even up to the second floor window, is hung with hares, rabbits, pheasants, wild-ducks, turkeys, and partridges.

But, if Christmas is a season of greatness to some, of hilarity to many, of importance to all, it is pre-eminently a season of equal anxiety and splendour to THE COOK. Her long kitchen-range is a perfect bonfire, from morning to night, while the various bright utensils which are placed upon the chimney-piece and on the walls at both sides of it, are profusely interspersed with twigs and boughs of holly. "Now, *do* get out of my way, all of you! — don't you see how much I have got on my mind with this Christmas dinner! Where's Jane? — Jane Stokes! — oh, the plague of kitchen-maids! they're always out of the way at the moment they're

most wanted. Barbara, *are the vegetables washed?* "Not yet, Cook!" It's always "not yet" with them scullery-girls! Oh, how the Cook wishes there were no need for any help from any soul alive, if so be as she could but do everything herself, which is that is where it is and all about it! But the Christmas dinner don't get spoiled; by no means — everything turns out excellently, and compliments, like full-blown cabbage-roses, are showered upon Cook from the visitors of the hospitable board. They are brought to her, as she sits wiping her forehead, and all her face and throat, in a cool and remote corner. Her heart expands; she loves all mankind; and she retires to rest, after a small glass of cordial, at peace with herself and all the world.

AN IDYL FOR CHRISTMAS IN-DOORS.

"The houses were decked with evergreens in December, that the Sylvan Spirits might repair to them, and remain unnipped with frost and cold winds, until a milder season had renewed the foliage of their abodes." — BRAND'S *Popular Antiquities*.

SCENE: — *A room by twilight, on Christmas Eve: the fire burning with a sleepy red. Branches of Holly, Laurel, and Mistletoe, hanging on the walls. A Sylvan Spirit sitting in each plant.*

SPIRIT OF THE HOLLY.

THE icy streams are black and slow;
The icy wind goes sighing, sighing;
And far around, and deep below,
The great, broad, blank, unfeatured snow
On the idle earth is lying;
And the birds in the air are dying.

Just now, ere the day-beams fled,
Out of doors I thrust my head,
And saw the livid western light
Shrink up, like an eye bewitch'd,
At the staring of the Night.
The bare branches writhed and twitch'd;
And the holly-bushes old
Chatter'd among themselves for cold,
And scraped their leaves 'gainst one another,
And nestled close, like child with mother.
Ay, not all the globy fire
Of their berries, scarlet hot,
Which the mortals all admire,
Could their bodies warm a jot:
They look'd heavy and sad, God wot!
The nested birds sat close together,
'Plaining of the mournful weather;
And the tough and tangled hedges,
Near and distant, mark'd the track
Of the roadway, and the edges
Of the fields, with lines of black.
Soon I skipp'd, all shivering, back.
Here, beneath the sheltering eaves
Of the ceiling, dry and warm,
Air, like breath of Summer, weaves
In between my glossy leaves,
Doing me no harm:
And the CHRISTMAS spirit benign
Sparkles in my heart like wine.

SPIRIT OF THE LAUREL.

Gone is the Summer's warmth and light;
Gone are the rich, red Autumn days;
And Winter old, and Winter white,
Sits moodily in the open ways.
Like a great dumb marble statue,
'Bideth he upon the wold;
And his grey eyes, staring at you,
Make you also dumb with cold.
And the woods grow lean and swarth
In the vexings of the North;
Fill'd with sighings and lamentations
Of the winged forest nations,
Who, beneath their shatter'd bowers,
Wonder at the gusty showers,
And the length of the dark hours.
But the in-door year is bright
With the flush of CHRISTMAS light;
And the breath of that glad comer
Kindles with a second Summer,
In the which, blithe hearts are seen
Bursting into tenfold green,
Till they sit embower'd, and sing
Under their own blossoming.
Therefore we, the woodland fairies,
Hold at present with the Lares,
Leaving Winter for the noon

Of this glowing household June;
Whereunto an added splendour
Preternatural we render,
Quickening, as with inward soul,
The intensely-burning coal.

SPIRIT OF THE MISTLETOE.

Behind the night young morn is sleeping,
And new hope underlies old weeping.
So, though all the woods are stark,
And the heavens are drowsy-dark,
Earth, within her shadows dun,
Swings about the golden sun,
Firm and steadily,
True and readily,
Strong in her pulses, every one.
In a deadly sleep she seems;
But her heart is full of dreams —
Full of dreaming and of vision,
Subtle, typical, Elysian,
Out of which, in time, shall rise
All the New Year's verities.
And the spirit within her veins
Laughs and leaps like April rains;
Warming with electric breath
The dark coldness underneath,
Where, close shut from human seeing,
Lie the secret nests of being,
And the embryo phantoms, — hosts
Of pale ante-natal ghosts, —
Bloodless germs of flowers and leaves,
From which the lady Spring receives,
When they wake to life, the flush
Of her many colour'd blush.
Meanwhile, every shade of sadness
Melts away in CHRISTMAS gladness.
Green old CHRISTMAS! he doth bring
With him his peculiar Spring; —
Newly-germinating kindness,
Mutual help in human blindness,
Closing of old wounds, fresh greetings,
Souls a-flow at genial meetings,
Hovering fancies, loving laughter,
And the grave thoughts coming after;
All the lightness, brightness, dancing,
Interflowing, rainbow glancing,
Awful sweetness, wing'd with pleasure,
Of a heart that has no measure.

ALL.

Therefore will we here remain
Till the woods are green again,
And the sun makes golden glooms
In the forest's pillar'd rooms.
Here we can abide together
Through the fire-lit CHRISTMAS weather,
And, though none may us descry,

Touch with sense of mystery
The hot feasting and loud joy,
Which, uncurb'd, themselves destroy,
And die childless: for true mirth,
Like the Heaven-embraced earth,
Should be large and full — yet bound
By the haunted depths all round.

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS IN COUNTRY PLACES.

IF we want to see the good old Christmas — the traditional Christmas — of old England, we must look for it in the country. There are lasting reasons why the keeping of Christmas cannot change in the country as it may in towns. The seasons themselves ordain the festival. The close of the year is an interval of leisure in agricultural regions; the only interval of complete leisure in the year; and all influences and opportunities concur to make it a season of holiday and festivity. If the weather is what it ought to be at that time, the autumn crops are in the ground; and the springing wheat is safely covered up with snow. Everything is done for the soil that can be done at present; and as for the clearing and trimming and repairing, all that can be looked to in the after part of the winter; and the planting is safe if done before Candlemas. The plashing of hedges, and cleaning of ditches, and trimming of lanes, and mending of roads, can be got through between Twelfth Night and the early spring ploughing; and a fortnight may well be given to jollity, and complete change.

Such a holiday requires a good deal of preparation: so Christmas is, in this way also, a more weighty affair in the rural districts than elsewhere. The strong beer must be brewed. The pigs must be killed weeks before; the lard is wanted; the bacon has to be cured; the hams will be in request; and, if brawn is sent to the towns, it must be ready before the children come home for the holidays. Then, there is the fattening of the turkeys and geese to be attended to; a score or two of them to be sent to London, and perhaps half-a-dozen to be enjoyed at home. When the gentleman, or the farmer, or the country shop-keeper, goes to the great town for his happy boys and girls, he has a good deal of shopping to do. Besides carrying a note to the haberdasher, and ordering coffee, tea, dried fruit, and spices, he must remember not to forget the packs of cards that will be wanted for loo and whist. Perhaps he carries a secret order for fiddlestrings from a neighbour who is practising his part in good time.

There is one order of persons in the country to whom the month of December is anything but a holiday season — the cooks. Don't tell us of town-cooks in the same breath! It is really overpowering to the mind to think what the country cooks have to attend to. The goose-pie, alone, is an achievement to be complacent about; even the most ordinary goose-pie; still more, a superior one, with a whole goose in the middle,

and another cut up and laid round; with a fowl or two, and a pheasant or two, and a few larks put into odd corners; and the top, all shiny with white of egg, figured over with leaves of pastry, and tendrils and crinkle-crankles, with a bunch of the more delicate bird feet standing up in the middle. The oven is the cook's child and slave; the great concern of her life, at this season. She pets it, she humours it, she scolds it, and she works it without rest. Before daylight she is at it — baking her oat bread; that bread which requires such perfect behaviour on the part of the oven! Long lines of oat-cakes hang overhead, to grow crisp before breakfast; and these are to be put away when crisp, to make room for others; for she can hardly make too much. After breakfast, and all day, she is making and baking meat-pies, mince-pies, sausage-rolls fruit-pies, and cakes of all shapes, sizes, and colours. And at night, when she can scarcely stand for fatigue, she "banks" the oven fire, and puts in the great jar of stock for the soups, that the drawing may go on, from all sorts of savoury odds and ends, while everything but the drowsy fire is asleep. She wishes the dear little lasses would not come messing and fussing about, making gingerbread and cheese-cakes. She would rather do it herself, than have them in her way. But she has not the heart to tell them so. On the contrary, she gives them ginger, and cuts the citron-peel bountifully for them;

hoping, the while, that the weather will be fine enough for them to go into the woods with their brothers for holly and ivy. Meantime, the dairy-woman says, (what she declares every Christmas,) that she never saw such a demand for cream and butter; and that, before Twelfth Night, there will be none. And how, at that season, can she supply eggs by scores, as she is expected to do? The gingerbread baked, the rosiest apples picked out from their straw in the apple-closet, the cats, and dogs, and canary birds, played with and fed, the little lasses run out to see what the boys are about.

The woodmen want something else than green to dress the house with. They are looking for the thickest, and hardest, and knottiest block of wood they can find, that will go into the kitchen chimney. A gnarled stump of elm will serve their purpose best; and they trim it into a size to send home. They fancy that their holiday is to last as long as this log remains; and they are satisfied that it will be uncommonly difficult to burn up this one. This done, one of them proceeds with the boys and girls to the copses where the hollies are thickest; and by carrying his bill-hook, he saves a vast deal of destruction by rending and tearing. The poor little birds, which make the hollies so many aviaries in winter, coming to feed on the berries, and to pop in among the shining leaves for shelter, are sadly scared, and out they flit on all sides, and away to the great oak,

where nobody will follow them. For, alas! there is no real mistletoe now. There is to be something so called hung from the middle of the kitchen ceiling, that the lads and lasses may snatch kisses and have their fun; but it will have no white berries, and no Druidical dignity about it. It will be merely a bush of evergreen, called by some a mistletoe, and by others the Bob, which is supposed to be a corruption of "bough." When all the party have got their fagots tied up, and strung over their shoulders, and button-holes, hats, and bonnets stuck with sprigs, and gay with berries, it is time they were going home; for there is a vast deal to be done this Christmas Eve, and the sunshine is already between the hills, in soft yellow gushes, and not on them.

A vast deal there is to be done; and especially if there is any village near. First, there is to dress the house with green; and then to go and help to adorn the church. The Bob must not be hung up till to-morrow: but every door has a branch over it; and the leads of the latticed windows are stuck with sprigs; and every picture-frame, and looking-glass, and candlestick is garnished. Any "scraps" (very young children) who are too small to help, pick up scattered holly-leaves, and, being not allowed to go upon the rug, beg somebody to throw them into the fire; whence ensues a series of cracklings, and sputtering blazes, and lighting up of wide-open eyes. In the midst of this—hark! is not

that the church bell? The boys go out to listen, and report that it is so; — the “Christmas deal” (or dole) is about to begin; so, off go all who are able, up to the church.

It is very cold there, and dim, and dreary, in spite of the candles, and the kindness, and other good things that are collected there. By the time the bell has ceased to clang, there are a few gentlemen there, and a number of widows, and aged men, and orphan children. There are piles of blankets; and bits of paper, which are orders for coals. One gentleman has sent a bag of silver money; and another, two or three sheep, cut up ready for cooking; and another, a great pile of loaves. The boys run and bring down a ladder to dress the pillars; and scuffle in the galleries; and venture into the pulpit, under pretence of dressing the church. When the dole is done and the poor people gone, the doors are closed; and, if the boys remain, they must be quiet; for the organist and the singers are going to rehearse the anthem that is to be sung to-morrow. If the boys are not quiet, they are turned out.

There is plenty of bustle in the village. The magistrates are in the long room of the inn, settling justice business. The inn looks as if it were illuminated. The waiters are seen to glide across the hall; and on the steps are the old constable, and the new rural policeman, and the tax-collector, and the postman. It is so cold that something steaming hot will

soon be brought for them to drink; and the poor postman will be taken on his weak side. Christmas is a trying season to him, with his weak head, and his popularity, and his Christmas-boxes, and his constant liability to be reported. Cold as it is, there are women flitting about; going to or from the grocer's shop, and all bringing away the same things. The grocers give away, this night, to their regular customers, a good mould candle each, and a nutmeg. This is because the women must be up by candle-light to-morrow, to make something that is to be spiced with nutmeg. So a good number of women pass by with a candle and a nutmeg; and some, with a bottle or pitcher, come up the steps, and go to the bar for some rum. But the clock strikes supper-time, and away go the boys home.

Somebody wonders at supper whether the true oval mince-pie is really meant to be in the form of a certain manger; and its contents to signify the gifts, various and rich, brought by the Magi to that manger. And while the little ones are staring at this news, somebody else observes that it was a pretty idea of the old pagans, in our island, of dressing up their houses with evergreens, that there might be a warm retreat for the spirits of the woods in times of frost and bitter winter storms. Some child peeps timidly up at the biggest branch in the room, and fancies what it would be to see some sprite sitting under a leaf, or dancing

along a spray. When supper is done, and the youngest are gone to bed, having been told not to be surprised if they should hear the stars singing in the night, the rest of the party turn to the fire, and begin to roast their chestnuts in the shovel, and to heat the elderwine in the old-fashioned saucepan, silvered inside. One absent boy, staring at the fire, starts when his father offers him a chestnut for his thoughts. He hesitates, but his curiosity is vivid, and he braves all the consequences of saying what he is thinking about. He wonders whether he might, just for once, — just for this once — go to the stalls when midnight has struck, and see whether the oxen are kneeling. He has heard, and perhaps read, that the oxen kneeled, on the first Christmas-day, and kept the manger warm with their breath; and that all oxen still kneel in their stalls when Christmas-day comes in. Father and mother exchange a quick glance of agreement to take this seriously; and they explain that there is now so much uncertainty, since the New Style of reckoning the days of the year was introduced, that the oxen cannot be depended on; and it is not worth while to be out of bed at midnight for the chance. Some say the oxen kneel punctually when Old Christmas comes in; and if so, they will not do it to-night.

This is not the quietest night of the year; even if nobody visits the oxen. Soon after all are settled to sleep, sounds arise which thrill

through some who are half-awakened by them, and then, remembering something about the stars singing, the children rouse themselves, and lie, with open eyes and ears, feeling that Christmas morning has come. They must soon, one would think, give up the star theory; for the music is only two fiddles, or a fiddle and clarionet; or, possibly, a fiddle and drum, with a voice or two, which can hardly be likened to that of the spheres. The voices sing, "While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night;" and then — marvellously enough — single out this family of all the families on the earth, to bless with the good wishes of the season. They certainly are wishing to master and mistress and all the young ladies and gentlemen, "good morning," and "a merry Christmas and a happy New Year." Before this celestial mystery is solved, and before the distant twang of the fiddle is quite out of hearing, the celestial mystery of sleep enwraps the other, and lays it to rest until the morrow. The boys — the elder ones — meant to keep awake; first, for the Waits, and afterwards to determine for themselves whether the cock crows all night on Christmas Eve, to keep all hurtful things from walking the earth. When the Waits are gone, they just remember that any night, between this and Old Christmas, will do for the cock, which is said to defy evil spirits in this manner for the whole of that season. Which the boys are very glad to remember; for they are

excessively sleepy; so off they go into the land of dreams.

It is now past two; and at three the maids must be up. Christmas morning is the one, of all the year, when, in the North of England especially, families make a point of meeting, and it must be at the breakfast table. In every house, far and near, where there is fuel and flour, and a few pence to buy currants, there are cakes making, which everybody must eat of; cakes of pastry, with currants between the layers. The grocer has given the nutmeg; and those who can afford it, add rum, and other dainties. The ladies are up betimes, to set out the best candlesticks, to garnish the table, to make the coffee, and to prepare a welcome for all who claim a seat. The infant in arms must be there, as seven o'clock strikes. Any married brother or sister, living within reach, must be there, with the whole family train. Long before sunrise, there they sit, in the glow of the fire and the glitter of candles, chatting and laughing, and exchanging good wishes.

In due time, the church-bell calls the flock of worshippers from over hill, and down dale, and along commons, and across fields: and presently they are seen coming, all in their best, — the majority probably saying the same thing, — that, somehow, it seems always to be fine on Christmas-day. Then, one may reckon up the exceptions he remembers; and another may tell of different sorts of fine weather that he has known; how, on

one occasion, his daughter gathered thirty-four sorts of flowers in their own garden on Christmas-day; and the rose-bushes had not lost their leaves on Twelfth Day; and then the wise will agree how much they prefer a good seasonable frost and sheeted snow like this, to April weather in December.

Service over, the bell silent, and the sexton turning the key in the lock, off run the young men, out of reach of remonstrance, to shoot, until dinner at least, — more probably until the light fails. They shoot almost any thing that comes across them, but especially little birds, — chaffinches, blackbirds, thrushes, — any winged creature distressed by the cold, or betrayed by the smooth and cruel snow. The little children at home are doing better than their elder brothers. They are putting out crumbs of bread for the robins, and feeling sorry and surprised that robins prefer bread to plum-pudding. They would have given the robins some of their own pudding, if they had but liked it.

In every house, there is dinner to-day, — of one sort or another, — except where the closed shutter shows that the folk are out to dinner. The commonest dinner in the poorer houses — in some parts of the country — is a curious sort of mutton pie. The meat is cut off a loin of mutton, and reduced to mouthfuls, and then strewed over with currants or raisins and spice, and the whole covered in with a stout crust. In

some places, the dinner is baked meat and potatoes: in too many cottages, there is nothing better than a morsel of bacon to flavour the bread or potatoes. But it may be safely said that there is more and better dining in England on Christmas-day than on any other day of the year.

In the houses of gentry and farmers, the dinner and dessert are a long affair, and soon followed by tea, that the sports may begin. Everybody knows what these sports are, in parlour, hall, and kitchen:—singing, dancing, cards, blind-man's buff, and other such games; forfeits, ghost-story telling, snap-dragon;—these, with a bountiful supper interposed, lasting till midnight. In scattered houses, among the wilds, card-playing goes on briskly. Wherever there are Wesleyans enough to form a congregation, they are collected at a tea-drinking in their chapel; and they spend the evening in singing hymns. Where there are Germans settled, or any leading family which has been in Germany, there is a Christmas-tree lighted up somewhere. Those Christmas-trees are as prolific as the inexhaustible cedars of Lebanon. Wherever one strikes root, a great number is sure to spring up under its shelter.

However spent, the evening comes to an end. The hymns in the chapel, and the carols in the kitchen, and the piano in the parlour are all hushed. The ghosts have glided by into the night. The forfeits are redeemed. The

blind-man has recovered his sight, and lost it again in sleep. The dust of the dancers has subsided. The fires are nearly out, and the candles quite so. The reflection that the great day is over, would have been too much for some little hearts, sighing before they slept, but for the thought that to-morrow is Boxing-day; and that Twelfth Night is yet to come.

But, first, will come New Year's Eve, with its singular inconvenience (in some districts) of nothing whatever being carried out of the house for twenty-four hours, lest, in throwing away anything, you should be throwing away some luck for the next year. Not a potato-paring, nor a drop of soap-suds or cabbage-water, not a cinder, nor a pinch of dust, must be removed till New Year's morning. In these places, there is one person who must be stirring early—the darkest man in the neighbourhood. It is a serious thing there to have a swarthy complexion and black hair; for the owner cannot refuse to his acquaintance the good luck of his being the first to enter their houses on New Year's day. If he is poor, or his time is precious, he is regularly paid for his visit. He comes at day-break, with something in his hand, if it is only an orange or an egg, or a bit of ribbon, or a twopenny picture. He can't stay a minute,—he has so many to visit; but he leaves peace of mind behind him. His friends begin the year with the advantage of having seen a dark

man enter their house the first in the New Year.

Such, in its general features, is Christmas, throughout the rural districts of Old England. Here, the revellers may be living in the midst of pastoral levels, all sheeted with snow; there, in deep lanes, or round a village green, with ploughed slopes rising on either hand: here, on the spurs of mountains, with glittering icicles hanging from the grey precipices above them, and the accustomed waterfall bound in silence by the frost beside their doors; and there again, they may be within hearing of the wintry surge, booming along the rocky shore; but the revelry is of much the same character everywhere. There may be one old superstition in one place, and another in another; but that which is no superstition is everywhere; — the hospitality, the mirth, the social glow which spreads from heart to heart, which thaws the pride and the purse-strings, and brightens the eyes and affections.

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS IN THE COMPANY OF JOHN DOE.

I HAVE kept (amongst a store of jovial, genial, heart-stirring returns of the season) some very dismal Christmases. I have kept Christmas in Constantinople, at a horrible Pera hotel, where I attempted the manufacture of a plum-pudding from the macca-

roni-soup they served me for dinner, mingled with some Zante currants, and a box of figs I had brought from Smyrna; and where I sat, until very late at night, endeavouring to persuade myself that it was cold and "Christmassy" (though it was n't), drinking Levant wine, and listening to the howling of the dogs outside, mingled with the clank of a portable fire-engine, which some soldiers were carrying to one of those extensive conflagrations which never happen in Constantinople oftener than three times a day. I have kept Christmas on board a Boulogne packet, in company with a basin, several despair-stricken females, and a damp steward; who, to all our inquiries whether we should be "in soon," had the one unvarying answer of "pretty near" to give. I have kept Christmas, when a boy, at a French boarding-school, where they gave me nothing but lentils and *bouilli* for dinner, on the auspicious day itself. I have kept Christmas by the bedside of a sick friend, and wished him the compliments of the season in his physic-bottles (had they contained another six months' life, poor soul!) I have kept Christmas at rich men's tables, where I have been uncomfortable; and once in a cobbler's shop, where I was excessively convivial. I have spent one Christmas in prison. Start not, urbane reader! I was not sent there for larceny, nor for misdemeanour: but for debt.

It was Christmas-eve; and I —

my name is Prupper — was taking my walks abroad. I walked through the crowded Strand, elate, hilarious, benignant, for the feast was prepared, and the guests were bidden. Such a turkey I had ordered! Not the prize one with the ribbons — I mistrusted that; but a plump, tender, white-breasted bird, a king of turkeys. It was to be boiled with oyster-sauce; and the rest of the Christmas dinner was to consist of that noble sirloin of roast beef, and that immortal cod's head and shoulders! I had bought the materials for the pudding too, some half-hour previously: the plums and the currants, the citron and the allspice, the flour and the eggs. I was happy.

Onward, by the bright grocer's shops, thronged with pudding-purchasers! Onward, by the bookseller's, though lingering, it may be, for a moment, by the gorgeous Christmas books, with their bright binding, and brighter pictures. Onward, by the pastry cook's! Onward, elate, hilarious, and benignant, until, just as I stopped by a poulterer's shop, to admire the finest capon that ever London or Christmas saw, a hand was laid on my shoulder!

"Before our sovereign lady the Queen" — "by the grace of God, greeting" — "that you take the body of Thomas Prupper, and him safely keep" — "and for so doing, this shall be your warrant."

These dread and significant words swam before my dazzled eyelids, dancing maniac hornpipes

on a parchment slip of paper. I was to keep Christmas in no other company than that of the once celebrated fictitious personage, supposed to be the familiar of all persons similarly situated — JOHN DOE.

I remembered with horror, that some fortnight previously, a lawyer's clerk deposited on my shoulder a slip of paper, which he stated to be the copy of a writ, and in which her Majesty the Queen (mixed up for the nonce with John, Lord Campbell) was pleased to command me to enter an appearance somewhere, by such a day, in order to answer the plaint of somebody, who said I owed him some money. Now, an appearance had not been entered, and judgment had gone by default, and execution had been obtained against me. The Sheriff of Middlesex (who is popularly, though erroneously, supposed to be incessantly running up and down in his bailiwick) had had a writ of *fieri facias*, vulgarly termed a *fi. fa.* against my goods; but hearing, or satisfying himself by adroit espionage, that I had *no* goods, he had made a return of *nulla bona*. Then had he invoked the aid of a more subtle and potential instrument, likewise on parchment, called a *capias ad satisfaciendum*, abbreviated in legal parlance into *ca. sa.*, against my body. This writ he had confided to Aminadab, his man; and Aminadab, running, as he was in duty bound to do, up and down in his section of the bailiwick, had come across me,

and had made me the captive of his bow and spear. He called it, less metaphorically, "nabbing me."

Mr. Aminadab, (tall, aquiline-nosed, oleaginous, somewhat dirty; clad in a green Newmarket coat, a crimson velvet waistcoat, a purple satin neckcloth with gold flowers, two watch-guards, and four diamond rings,) — Mr. Aminadab proposed that "something should be done." Would I go to Whitecross-street at once? or to Blowman's, in Cursitor-street? or would I just step into Peele's Coffee-house for a moment? Mr. Aminadab was perfectly polite, and indefatigably suggestive.

The capture had been made in Fleet Street; so we stepped into Peele's, and while Mr. Aminadab sipped the pint of wine which he had obligingly suggested I should order, I began to look my position in the face. Execution taken out for forty-five pounds nine and ninepence. *Ca. sa.*, a guinea; *fi. fa.*, a guinea; capture, a guinea; those were all the costs as yet. Now, some days after I was served with the writ, I had paid the plaintiff's lawyer, on account, thirty pounds. In the innocence of my heart, I imagined that, by the County Court Act, I could not be arrested for the balance, it being under twenty pounds. Mr. Aminadab laughed with contemptuous pity.

"We do n't do business that way," said he; "we goes in for the whole lot, and then you pleads your set-off, you know."

The long and the short of the matter was, that I had eighteen pounds, twelve shillings, and nine pence, to pay, before my friend in the purple neckcloth would relinquish his grasp; and that to satisfy the demand, I had exactly the sum of two pounds two and a half-penny, and a gold watch, on which a relation of mine would probably advance four pounds more. So, I fell to writing letters, Mr. Aminadab sipping the wine and playing with one of his watch-chains in the meanwhile.

I wrote to Jones, Brown, and Robinson — to Thompson, and to Jackson likewise. I wrote to my surly uncle in Pudding-lane. Now was the time to put the disinterested friendship of Brown to the test; to avail myself of the repeated offers of service from Jones; to ask for the loan of that sixpence which Robinson had repeatedly declared was at my command as long as he had a shilling. I sealed the letters with an unsteady hand, and consulted Mr. Aminadab as to their despatch. That gentleman, by some feat of legerdemain, called up from the bowels of the earth, or from one of those mysterious localities known as "round the corner," two sprites: one, his immediate assistant; seedier, however, and not jewelled, who carried a nobby stick which he continually gnawed. The other, a horrible little man with a white head and a white neckcloth, twisted round his neck like a halter. His eye was red, and his teeth were gone, and the

odour of rum compassed him about, like a cloak. To these two acolytes my notes were confided, and they were directed to bring the answers like lightning to Blowman's. To Blowman's, in Cursitor-street, Chancery-lane, I was bound, and a cab was straightway called for my conveyance thereto. For the matter of that, the distance was so short, I might easily have walked, but I could not divest myself of the idea that everybody in the street knew I was a prisoner.

I was soon within the hospitable doors of Mr. Blowman, officer to the Sheriff of Middlesex. His hospitable doors were double, and, for more hospitality, heavily barred, locked, and chained. These, with the exceptions of barred windows, and a species of grating-roofed yard outside, like a monster bird-cage, were the only visible signs of captivity. Yet there was enough stone in the hearts, and iron in the souls, of Mr. Blowman's inmates, to build a score of lock-up houses. For that you may take my word.

I refused the offer of a private room, and was conducted to the coffee-room, where Mr. Aminadab left me, for a while, to my own reflections; and to wait for the answers to my letters.

They came — and one friend into the bargain. Jones had gone to Hammersmith, and wouldn't be back till next July. Brown had been disappointed in the City. Robinson's money was all locked up. Thompson expected to be

locked up himself. Jackson was brief, but explicit: he said he "would rather not."

My friend brought me a carpet-bag, with what clothes I wanted in it. He advised me, moreover, to go to Whitecross Street at once, for a sojourn at Mr. Blowman's domicile would cost me something like a guinea per diem. So, summoning Mr. Aminadab, who had obligingly waited to see if I could raise the money or not, I announced my intention of being conveyed to gaol at once. I paid half-a-guinea for the accommodation I had had at Mr. Blowman's; I made a pecuniary acknowledgment of Mr. Aminadab's politeness; and I did not fail to remember the old man in the white halter and the spirituous mantle. Then, when I had also remembered a red-headed little Jew boy who acted as Cerberus to this Hades, and appeared to be continually washing his hands (though they never seemed one whit the cleaner for the operation), another cab was called, and off I went to Whitecross Street, with a heart considerably heavier than a paving-stone.

I had already been three hours in captivity, and it was getting on for eight o'clock. The cab was proceeding along Holborn, and I thought, involuntarily, of Mr. Samuel Hall, black and grimy, making his progress through the same thoroughfare, by the Oxford Road, and so on to Tyburn, bowing to the crowd and cursing the Ordinary. The foot-pavement on either side was thronged with peo-

ple at their Christmas marketing, or, at least, on some Christmas business — so it seemed to me. Goose Clubs were being held at the public-houses — sweeps for sucking-pigs, plum-puddings, and bottles of gin. Some ladies and gentlemen had begun their Christmas rather too early, and were meandering unsteadily over the flag-stones. Fiddlers were in great request, being sought for in small beershops, and borne off bodily from bars, to assist at Christmas Eve merry-makings. An immense deal of hand-shaking was going on, and I was very much afraid, a good deal more “standing” than was consistent with the strict rules of temperance. Everybody kept saying that it was “only once a year,” and made that an apology (so prone are mankind to the use of trivial excuses!) for their sins against Father Mathew. Loud laughter rang through the frosty air. Pleasant jokes, innocent “chaff,” passed; grocers’ young men toiled lustily, wiping their hot faces ever and anon; butchers took no rest; prize beef melted away from very richness before my eyes; and in the midst of all the bustle and jollity, the crowding, laughing, drinking, and shouting, I was still on my unvarying way to Whitecross Street.

There was a man resting a child’s coffin on a railing, and chattering with a pot-boy, with whom he shared a pot of porter, “with the sharp edge taken off.” There are heavy hearts — heavier perchance than yours, in London this Christmas

Eve, my friend Prupper, thought I. To-morrow’s dawn will bring sorrow and faint-heartedness to many thousands — to oceans of humanity, of which you are but a single drop.

The cab had conveyed me through Smithfield Market, and now rumbled up Barbican. My companion, the gentleman with the crab-stick (to whose care Mr. Aminadab had consigned me) beguiled the time with pleasant and instructive conversation. He told me that he had “ nabbed a many parties.” That he had captured a Doctor of Divinity going to a Christmas, a bridegroom starting for the honeymoon, a Colonel of Hussars in full fig for her Majesty’s drawing-room. That he had the honour once of “ nabbing ” the eldest son of a peer of the realm, who, however, escaped from him through a second-floor window, and over the tiles. That he was once commissioned to “ nab ” the celebrated Mr. Wix, of the Theatres Royal. That Mr. Wix, being in the act of playing the Baron Spolaccio, in the famous tragedy of “ Love, Ruin, and Revenge,” he, Crabstick, permitted him, in deference to the interests of the drama, to play the part out, stationing an assistant at each wing to prevent escape. That the delusive Wix “ bilked ” him, by going down a trap. That he, Crabstick, captured him, notwithstanding, under the stage, though opposed by the gigantic Wix himself, two stage carpenters, a demon, and the Third Citizen. That Wix

rushed on the stage and explained his position to the audience, where-upon the gallery (Wix being an especial favourite of theirs) expressed a strong desire to have his (Crabstick's) blood; and, failing to obtain that, tore up the benches; in the midst of which operation the recalcitrant Wix was removed. With these and similar anecdotes of the nobility, gentry, and the public in general, he was kind enough to regale me, until the cab stopped. I alighted in a narrow dirty street; was hurried up a steep flight of steps; a heavy door clanged behind me; and Crabstick, pocketing his small gratuity, wished me a good night and a merry Christmas. A merry Christmas: ugh!

That night I slept in a dreadful place, called the Reception ward, — on an iron bedstead, in a room with a stone floor. I was alone, and horribly miserable. I heard the Waits playing in the distance, and dreamed I was at a Christmas party.

Christmas morning in Whitecross Street Prison! A turnkey conducted me to the "Middlesex side" — a long dreary yard — on either side of which were doors leading into wards, or coffee-rooms, on the ground floor, and, by stone-staircases, to sleeping apartments above. It was all very cold, very dismal, very gloomy. I entered the ward allotted to me, Number Seven, left. It was a long room, with barred windows, cross tables and benches, with an aisle between; a large fire at the farther

end; "Dum spiro, spero," painted above the mantel-piece. Twenty or thirty prisoners and their friends were sitting at the tables, smoking pipes, drinking beer, or reading newspapers. But for the unmistakeable jail-bird look about the majority of the guests, the unshorn faces, the slipshod feet, the barred windows, and the stone floor, I might have fancied myself in a large tap-room.

There was holly and mistletoe round the gas-pipes; but how woful and forlorn they looked! There was roast beef and plum-pudding preparing at the fire-place; but they had neither the odour nor the appearance of free beef and pudding. I was thinking of the cosy room, the snug fire, the well-drawn curtains, the glittering table, the happy faces, when the turnkey introduced me to the steward of the ward (an officer appointed by the prisoners, and a prisoner himself) who "tables you off," *i. e.*, who allotted me a seat at one of the cross-tables, which was henceforward mine for all purposes of eating, drinking, writing, or smoking; in consideration of a payment on my part of one guinea sterling. This sum made me also free of the ward, and entitled to have my boots cleaned, my bed made, and my meals cooked. Supposing that I had not possessed a guinea (which was likely enough), I should have asked for time, which would have been granted me; but, at the expiration of three days, omission of payment would have constituted me a de-

faulter; in which case, the best thing I could have done would have been to declare pauperism, and remove to the poor side of the prison. Here, I should have been entitled to my "sixpences," amounting, in the aggregate, to the sum of three shillings and sixpence a week towards my maintenance.

The steward, a fat man in a green "wide awake" hat, who was incarcerated on remand for the damages in an action for breach of promise of marriage, introduced me to the cook (who was going up next week to the Insolvent Court, having filed his schedule as a beer-shop keeper). He told me, that if I chose to purchase anything at a species of everything shop in the yard, the cook would dress it; or, if I did not choose to be at the trouble of providing myself, I might breakfast, dine, and sup at his, the steward's table, "for a consideration," as Mr. Trapbois has it. I acceded to the latter proposition, receiving the intelligence that turkey and oyster-sauce were to be ready at two precisely, with melancholy indifference. Turkey had no charms for me now.

I sauntered forth into the yard, and passed fifty or sixty fellow-unfortunates, sauntering as listlessly as myself. Strolling about, I came to a large grating, somewhat similar to Mr. Blowman's bird-cage, in which was a heavy gate called the "lock," and which communicated with the corridors leading to the exterior of the pri-

son. Here sat, calmly surveying his caged birds within, a turnkey — not a repulsive, gruff-voiced monster, with a red neckerchief and top boots, and a bunch of keys, as turnkeys are popularly supposed to be — but a pleasant, jovial man enough, in sleek black. He had a little lodge behind, where a bright fire burned, and where Mrs. Turnkey, and the little Turnkeys lived. (I found a direful resemblance between the name of his office, and that of the Christmas bird). His Christmas dinner hung to the iron bars above him, in the shape of a magnificent piece of beef. Happy turnkey, to be able to eat it on the outer side of that dreadful grating! In another part of the yard hung a large black board, inscribed in half-effaced characters, with the enumerations of divers donations, made in former times by charitable persons, for the benefit in perpetuity of poor prisoners. To-day, so much beef and so much strong beer was allotted to each prisoner.

But what were beef and beer, what was unlimited tobacco, or even the plum-pudding, when made from prison plums, boiled in a prison copper, and eaten in a prison dining-room? What though surreptitious gin were carried in, in bladders, beneath the under garments of the fairer portion of creation; what though brandy were smuggled into the wards, disguised as black draughts, or extract of sarsaparilla? A pretty Christmas market I had brought my pigs to!

Chapel was over (I had come down too late from the "Reception" to attend it); and the congregation (lamentably small one) dispersed in the yard and wards. I entered my own ward, to change (if anything could change) the dreary scene.

Smoking and cooking appeared to be the chief employments and recreations of the prisoners. An insolvent clergyman in rusty black, was gravely rolling out puff-paste on a pie-board; and a man in his shirt-sleeves, covering a veal cutlet with egg and breadcrumb, was an officer of dragoons!

I found no lack of persons willing to enter into conversation with me. I talked, full twenty minutes, with a seedy captive, with a white head, and a coat buttoned and pinned up to the chin.

Whitecross Street, he told me (or Burdon's Hotel, as in the prison slang he called it), was the only place where any "life" was to be seen. The Fleet was pulled down; the Marshalsea had gone the way of all brick-and-mortar; the Queen's Prison, the old "Bench," was managed on a strict system of classification and general discipline; and Horse-monger Lane was but rarely tenanted by debtors; but in favoured Whitecross Street, the good old features of imprisonment for debt yet flourished. Good dinners were still occasionally given; "fives" and football were yet played; and, from time to time, obnoxious attorneys, or importunate process-servers — "rats" as they were

called — were pumped upon, floured, and bonneted. Yet, even Whitecross Street, he said with a sigh, was falling off. The Small Debts Act and those revolutionary County Courts would be too many for it soon.

That tall, robust, bushy-whiskered man, (he said) in the magnificently flowered dressing-gown, the crimson Turkish smoking cap, the velvet slippers, and the ostentatiously displayed gold guard-chain, was a "mace-man:" an individual who lived on his wits, and on the want of wit in others. He had had many names, varying from Plantagenet and De Courcy, to "Edmonston and Co.," or plain Smith or Johnson. He was a real gentleman once upon a time—a very long time ago. Since then, he had done a little on the turf, and a great deal in French hazard, roulette, and *rouge et noir*. He had cheated bill-discounters, and discounted bills himself. He had been a picture-dealer, and a wine-merchant, and one of those mysterious individuals called a "commission agent." He had done a little on the Stock Exchange, and a little billiard-marking, and a little skittle-sharping, and a little thimblering. He was not particular. Bills, however, were his passion. He was under a cloud just now, in consequence of some bill-dealing transaction, which the Commissioner of Insolvency had broadly hinted to be like a bill-stealing one. However, he had wonderful elasticity, and it was to be hoped

would soon get over his little difficulties. Meanwhile, he dined sumptuously, and smoked cigars of price; occasionally condescending to toss half-crowns in a hat with any of the other "nobs" incarcerated.

That cap, and the battered worn-out sickly frame beneath, (if I would have the goodness to notice them) were all that were left of a spruce, rosy-cheeked, glittering young ensign of infantry. He was brought up by an old maiden aunt, who spent her savings to buy him a commission in the army. He went from Slow-chester Grammar School, to Fast-chester Barracks. He was to live on his pay. He gambled a year's pay away in an evening. He made thousand guinea bets, and lost them. So the old *dénouement* of the old story came round as usual. The silver dressing-case, got on credit—pawned for ready money; the credit-horses sold; more credit-horses bought; importunate creditors in the barrack-yard; a letter from the colonel; sale of his commission; himself sold up; then Mr. Aminadab, Mr. Blowman, Burdon's Hotel, Insolvent Court, a year's remand; and, an after life embittered by the consciousness of wasted time and talents, and wantonly-neglected opportunities.

My informant pointed out many duplicates of the gentleman in the dressing-gown. Also, divers Government clerks, who had attempted to imitate the nobs in a small way, and had only succeeded

to the extent of sharing the same prison; a mild grey-headed old gentleman who always managed to get committed for contempt of court; and the one inevitable baronet of a debtor's prison, who is traditionally supposed to have eight thousand a year, and to stop in prison because he likes it — though, to say the truth, this baronet looked, to me, as if he didn't like it at all.

I was sick of all these, and of everything else in Whitecross Street, before nine o'clock, when I was at liberty to retire to my cold ward. So ended my Christmas-day — my first, and, I hope and believe, my last Christmas-day in prison.

Next morning my welcome friend arrived and set me free. I paid the gate-fees, and I gave the turnkeys a crown, and I gave the prisoners unbounded beer. I kept New Year's day in company with a pretty cousin with glossy black hair, who was to have dined with me on Christmas-day, and who took such pity on me that she shortly became Mrs. Prupper. Our eldest boy was born, by a curious coincidence, next Christmas-day — which I kept very jovially, with the doctor, after it was all over, and we *didn't* christen him Whitecross.

THE ORPHAN'S DREAM OF CHRISTMAS.

It was Christmas Eve — and lonely,
 By a garret window high,
 Where the city chimneys barely
 Spared a hand's-breadth of the sky,
 Sat a child, in age, — but weeping,
 With a face so small and thin,
 That it seem'd too scant a record
 To have eight years traced therein.

Oh, grief looks most distorted
 When his hideous shadow lies
 On the clear and sunny life-stream
 That doth fill a child's blue eyes!
 But *her* eye was dull and sunken,
 And the whiten'd cheek was gaunt,
 And the blue veins on the forehead
 Were the pencilling of Want.

And she wept for years like jewels,
 Till the last year's bitter gall,
 Like the acid of the story,
 In itself had melted all;
 But the Christmas time returned,
 As an old friend, for whose eye
 She would take down all the pictures
 Sketch'd by faithful Memory,

Of those brilliant Christmas seasons,
 When the joyous laugh went round;
 When sweet words of love and kindness
 Were no unfamiliar sound;
 When, lit by the log's red lustre,
 She her mother's face could see,
 And she rock'd the cradle, sitting
 On her own twin-brother's knee:

Of her father's pleasant stories;
 Of the riddles and the rhymes,
 All the kisses and the presents
 That had mark'd those Christmas times.
 'T was as well that there was no one
 (For it were a mocking strain)
 To wish *her* a merry Christmas,
 For *that* could not come again.

How there came a time of struggling,
 When, in spite of love and faith,
 Grinding Poverty would only
 In the end give place to Death;
 How her mother grew heart-broken,
 When her toil-worn father died,
 Took her baby in her bosom,
 And was buried by his side:

How she clung unto her brother
 As the last spar from the wreck,

But stern Death had come between them
 While her arms were round his neck,
 There were *now* no loving voices;
 And, if few hands offered bread,
 There were none to rest in blessing
 On the little homeless head.

Or, if any gave her shelter,
 It was less of joy than fear;
 For they welcomed Crime more warmly
 To the selfsame room with her.
 But, at length they all grew weary
 Of their sick and useless guest;
 She must try a workhouse welcome
 For the helpless and distressed.

But she prayed; and the Unsleeping
 In His ear that whisper caught;
 So he sent down Sleep, who gave her
 Such a respite as she sought;
 Drew the fair head to her bosom,
 Pressed the wetted eyelids close,
 And, with softly-falling kisses,
 Lulled her gently to repose.

Then she dreamed the angels, sweeping
 With their wings the sky aside,
 Raised her swiftly to the country
 Where the blessed ones abide:
 To a bower all flushed with beauty,
 By a shadowy arcade,
 Where a mellowness like moonlight
 By the Tree of Life was made:

Where the rich fruit sparkled, star-like,
 And pure flowers of fadeless dye
 Poured their fragrance on the waters
 That in crystal beds went by:
 Where bright hills of pearl and amber
 Closed the fair green valleys round,
 And, with rainbow light, but lasting,
 Were their glistening summits crown'd.

Then, that distant-burning glory,
 'Mid a gorgeousness of light!
 The long vista of Archangels
 Could scarce chasten to her sight.
 There sat One: and her heart told her
 'T was the same, who, for our sin,
 Was once born a little baby
 "In the stable of an inn."

There was music — oh, such music! —
 They were trying the old strains
 That a certain group of shepherds
 Heard on old Judea's plains;
 But, when that divinest chorus
 To a softened trembling fell,
 Love's true ear discerned the voices
 That on earth she loved so well.

At a tiny grotto's entrance
 A fair child her eyes behold,
 With his ivory shoulders hidden
 'Neath his curls of living gold;
 And he asks them, "Is she coming?"
 But ere any one can speak,
 The white arms of her twin brother
 Are once more about her neck.

Then they all come round her greeting;
 But she might have well denied
 That her beautiful young sister
 Is the poor pale child that died;
 And the careful look hath vanish'd
 From her father's tearless face,
 And she does not know her mother
 Till she feels the old embrace.

Oh, from that ecstatic dreaming
 Must she ever wake again,
 To the cold and cheerless contrast, —
 To a life of lonely pain?
 But her Maker's sternest servant
 To her side on tiptoe stept;
 Told his message in a whisper, —
 And she stirr'd not as she slept!

Now the Christmas morn was breaking
 With a dim, uncertain hue,
 And the chilling breeze of morning
 Came the broken window through;
 And the hair upon her forehead,
 Was it lifted by the blast,
 Or the brushing wings of Seraphs,
 With their burden as they pass'd?

All the festive bells were chiming
 To the myriad hearts below;
 But that deep sleep still hung heavy
 On the sleeper's thoughtful brow.
 To her quiet face the dream-light
 Had a lingering glory given;
 But the child *herself* was keeping
 Her Christmas-day in Heaven!

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS AFTER A LONG ABSENCE.

SIXTEEN years have past since,
 a turbulent, discontented boy, I
 left England for Australia. My
 first serious study of geography
 began when I twirled about a
 great globe to find South Australia,

which was then the fashionable
 colony. My guardians — I was
 an orphan — were delighted to
 get rid of so troublesome a per-
 sonage; so, very soon I was the
 proud possessor of a town and
 country lot of land in the model
 colony of South Australia.

My voyage in a capital ship,
 with the best fare every day, and
 no one to say "Charles, you have
 had enough wine," was pleasant
 enough: very different from the
 case of some of my emigrating
 companions — fathers and mothers
 with families, who had left good
 homes, good incomes, snug estates,
 and respectable professions, ex-
 cited by speeches at public meet-
 ings, or by glowing pamphlets,
 descriptive of the charms of a
 colonial life in a model colony.
 I learned to smoke, drink grog,
 and hit a bottle swung from the
 yard-arm, with pistol or rifle. We
 had several very agreeable scamps
 on board; ex-cornets and lieute-
 nants, ex-government clerks,
 spoiled barristers and surgeons,
 plucked Oxonians, — empty,
 good-looking, well-dressed
 fellows, who had smoked meer-
 schaums, drunk Champagne,
 Hock, and Burgundy, fought
 duels, ridden steeple-chases, and
 contracted debts in every capital
 in Europe. These distinguished
 gentlemen kindly took me under
 their patronage, smoked my cigars,
 allowed me to stand treat for
 Champagne, taught me, at some
 slight expense, the arts of short
 whist, *écarté*, and unlimited loo;
 and to treat with becoming *hauteur*

any advances on the part of the intermediate passengers.

By the end of the one hundred days of our voyage, I was remarkably altered, but whether improved, may be a question; as the leading principles I had imbibed, were to the effect, that work of any kind was low, and that debts were gentlemanly. My preconceived notions of a model colony, with all the elements of civilisation, as promised in London, were rather upset, by observing, on landing, just within the wash of high-water, on the sandy beach, heaps of furniture, a grand piano or two, and chests of drawers in great numbers; and I especially remember a huge iron-banded oak plate-chest, half full of sand, and empty. The cause of this wholesale abandonment was soon made plain to me, in the shape of a charge of ten pounds for conveying my trunks in a bullock waggon, of which they formed less than half the load, seven miles from the port to the city of Adelaide; — the said city, which looked so grand in water colours in the Emigration Rooms in London, being at that time a picturesque and uncomfortable collection of tents, mud huts, and wooden cottages, curiously warped, rather larger than a Newfoundland dog's kennel, but letting for the rent of a mansion in any agricultural county of England.

It is not my intention, now, to tell the tale of the fall of the Model Colony and colonists of

South Australia, and the rise of the Copper Mines, which I did not stay to see. When a general smash was taking place on all sides, I accepted the offer of a rough diamond of an overlander, who had come across from the old colony with a lot of cattle and horses to sell to the Adelaideans. He had taken a fancy to me in consequence of the skill I had displayed in bleeding a valuable colt at a critical moment; one of the few useful things I had learned in England; and, when my dashing companions were drinking themselves into *delirium tremens*, enlisting in the police, accepting situations as shepherds, sponging for dinners on the once-despised "snobs," and imploring the captains of ships to let them work their way home before the mast, he offered to take me with him to his station in the interior, and "make a man of me." I turned my back on South Australia, and abandoned my country lot, on an inaccessible hill, to nature, and sold my town lot for five pounds. I began to perceive that work was the only means of getting on in a colony.

Accordingly, into the far Bush I went, and on the plains of a new-settled district, all solitary; constantly in danger from savage blacks; constantly occupied in looking after the wild shepherds and stockmen (herdsmen) of my overland friend; passing days on horseback at one period; at another, compelled to give my whole attention to the details of

a great establishment, — I rubbed off my old skin.

My fashionable affectations died away; my life became a *reality*, dependent on my own exertions. It was then that my heart began to change; it was then that I began to think tenderly of the brothers and sisters I had left behind, and with whom I had communicated so little in the days of my selfishness. Rarely oftener than twice in a year could I find means to forward letters; but the pen, once so hateful to me, became now, in hours of leisure, my great resource. Often and often have I sat in my hut at midnight, filling pages with my thoughts, my feelings, my regrets. The fire burning before my hut, where my men were sleeping, reminded me that I was not alone in the great pastoral desert, which sloping away from my station, rolled for hundreds of miles. Every sound was redolent of the romance of the strange land to which I had transplanted myself. The howl of the dingo prowling round my sheep-folds; the defying bark of my watchful dogs; the cry of the strange night-birds; and sometimes, echoing from the rocky ranges, the wild mountainous songs of the fierce aborigines, as they danced their corrobberies, and acted dramas representing the slaughter of the white man, and the plunder of his cattle. When such noises met my ear, I looked up to the rack where my arms lay, ready loaded, and out to where a faithful sentinel, the rebel O'Donohue, or the

poacher, Giles Brown, with musket on shoulder paced up and down, ready to die, but not to surrender. In this great desert, the petty cares, mean tricks of land jobbing, all the little contrivances for keeping up appearances no longer needed, were forgotten. My few books were not merely read; they were learned by heart. If in the morning I tired horses in galloping my rounds, and settled strife among my men with rude words, and even blows; in the evening, sitting apart, I was lost in the wanderings of Abraham, the trials of Job, or the Psalms of David.

I followed St. John into the wilderness, not unlike that before my eyes, and listened far from cities to the Sermon on the mount. At other times, as I paced along the open forests, I made the woods resound with the speeches of Homer's heroes, or the outbursts of Shakespeare's characters — outbursts that came home to me: for, in those lone regions, I was chief, warrior, and almost priest; for, when there was a death, I read the funeral service. And thus I educated myself.

While thus recalling friends neglected, and opportunities misused, and pleasant scenes of Eastern County life, I most loved to dwell upon the Christmas time of dear old England.

In our hot summer of Australian December, when the great river that divided and bounded my pastures drivelled to a string of pools, and my cattle were panting around — at the quiet hour of the

evening, when the stars, shining with a brilliancy unknown in northern climes, realised the idea of the blessed night when the star of Bethlehem startled and guided the kings of the Eastern world on their pious pilgrimage, — my thoughts travelled across the sea to England. I did not feel the sultry heat, or hear the cry of the nightbird, or the howl of the dingoe. I was across the sea, among the Christmas revellers. I saw the gay flushed faces of my kindred and friends shining round the Christmas table; the grace was said, the toast went round. I heard my own name mentioned, and the gay faces grew sad. Then I awoke from my dream and found myself alone, and wept. But in a life of action there is no time for useless grieving, though time enough for reflection and resolution. Therefore, after visions like these, I resolved that the time should come when, on a Christmas-day, the toast "*to absent friends*," should be answered by the Australian himself.

The time did come — this very year of the half century. Earnest labour and sober economy had prospered with me. The rich district in which I was one of the earliest pioneers, had become settled and pacified, as far as the river ran; the wild Myals had grown into the tame, blanket-clothed dependents of the settlers. Thousands of fine-woolled flocks upon the hills, and cattle upon the rich flats, were mine; the bark hut had changed into a verandahed

cottage, where books and pictures formed no insignificant part of the furniture; neighbours were within a ride; the voices of children often floated sweetly along the waters of the river.

Then said I to myself, I can return now. Not to remain; for the land I have conquered from the wilderness shall be my home for life: but I will return, to press the hands that have longed for many years to press mine; to kiss away the tears that dear sisters shed when they think of me, once almost an outcast; to take upon my knees those little ones who have been taught to pray for their "uncle in a far land across the broad deep sea." Perhaps I had a thought of winning some rosy English face and true English heart to share my pastoral home.

I did return, and trod again the shores of my mother country. My boyish expectations had not been realised, but better hopes had. I was not returning laden with treasures, to rival the objects of my foolish youthful vanity; but I was returning thankful, grateful, contented, independent, to look round once more on my native land, and then return to settle in the land of my adoption.

It was mid-winter when I landed at a small fishing village in the extreme west of England; for my impatience made me take advantage, during a calm in the Channel, of the first fisher's boat that boarded us.

The nearer we approached the shore, the more impatient I grew

to land. I insisted on giving my help to one of the heavy oars; and no sooner had we touched the ground, than, throwing myself into the water, I waded on shore. Oh, easy-going men of the great world, there are some pleasures you can never taste; and among them is the enthusiasm, the heart-felt, awe-stricken admiration of the dweller among pastoral plains when he finds himself once more at home among the gardens of England!

Garden is the only word to express the appearance of England, especially the west, where the bright green myrtle lingers through the winter, and the roadside near every town is bordered with charming cottages. At every mile I found some new object of admiration, above all, the healthful fresh cheeks of the people; especially the sturdy, yet delicate-complexioned lasses tripping away, basket in hand, from the markets in numbers, startling to one who had lived long where the arrival of one fair white face was an event.

The approach to the first great town was signalled by tokens less pleasing — nay, absolutely painful; — beggars, as I passed, stood in their rags and whined for alms; and others, not less pitiful in appearance, did not beg, but looked so wan and miserable, that it made my heart bleed. I gave to all, so that the man who drove me stared. He stared still more, when I told him that I came from a country where there were no

poor, save the drunken and the idle.

Entering a great town, the whirl, the commotion of passers on foot, on horseback, and in vehicles of all kinds, made me giddy; it was like a sort of nightmare. The signs of wealth, the conveniences provided for every imaginable want, were very strange to me, fresh from a country where able-bodied labour was always in demand, while a man thought himself equal to the longest journey, through an untrodden country, with a blanket and a tinpot for all his furniture, and all his cooking apparatus.

When I called in the landlord of the Inn to consult about getting on to Yorkshire in two days, as I wished to be with my friends as soon as possible, he said, "If you stay and rest to-night, you can get there by the railroad to-morrow morning, in good time to eat your Christmas dinner." I had never thought of that, and had only a vague idea what a railroad was like.

I reached the starting-place next morning, just in time to take my seat in a departing train. I started when, with a fearful sound of labouring machinery, we moved: then whirled away. I was ashamed of my fears; yet there were many in that train to whom a sea voyage would have only been less terrible than the solitary land journeys on horseback through the Bush of Australia, which were to me a mere matter of course. Without accident, I reached the station near York,

where I had to take a conveyance to reach by a cross country road the house where I knew that one of my brothers, farming a few hundred acres of his own land, assembled as many of our family as possible at Christmas time.

The little inn was able to supply a gig, driven by a decayed post-boy. Plunging at once into questioning conversation, I found an old acquaintance in the driver, without revealing who I was. Not many years older than myself, soured, disappointed, racked in health, he took a different view of life to anything I had yet heard. All along my road through England I had been struck by the prosperous condition of the well-to-do people I had met in first-class carriages. His occupation, his glory, was departed; he was obliged to do anything, and wear anything, instead of his once smart costume, and once pleasant occupation — instead of his gay jacket, and rapid ride, and handsome presents from travellers, and good dinners from landlords. In doleful spirits, he had a score of tales to tell of others worse off than himself — of landlords of posting-houses in the workhouse, and smart four-in-hand coachmen begging their bread — of farmers sunk down to labourers; and other doleful stories of the fate of those who were not strong enough for the race of life in England. Then I began to see there are two sides to the life that looked so brilliant out of the plate-glass windows of a first-class carriage.

The luxuries and comforts which taxes and turnpikes buy, are well worth the cost to those who can pay them; those who cannot, will do better to make shift in a colony. Thus thinking and talking, as I approached the place where, unexpected, I was to appear before a gathering of my relations, my flow of spirits died away. The proud consciousness of having conquered fortune, the beauty of the winter scenery (for winter, with its hoar frost shading the trees and foliage, has strange dazzling beauty to the eyes of those who have been accustomed to the one perpetual green-brown of semi-tropical Australia) had filled me full to overflowing with bounding joyousness. Gaily I answered back to the "Good night, master," of the passing peasantry, and vigorously puffed at my favourite pipe, in clouds that rivalled and rolled along with the clouds of mist that rose from the sweating horses. But the decayed postilion's stories of misery, in which he seemed to revel, damped me. My pipe went out, and my chin sunk despondingly on my breast. At length I asked, "Did he know the Barnards?" "Oh, yes, he knew them all." Mr. John had been very lucky with the railroad through one of his farms. He had ridden a pair at Miss Margaret's wedding, and driven a mourning coach at Miss Mary's funeral. The mare in the gig had belonged to Mr. John, and had been a rare good hunter. Mr. Robert had doctored him for his

rheumatics. "Did he know any more?" "Oh, yes; there was Master Charles; he went abroad somewhere to furren parts. Some people say he's dead, got killed, or hung, or something; and some say he's made a power of money. He was a wild slip of a lad. Many a time he's been out in the roads with some one I know very well, snaring hares and smoking of pheasants. There's a mark on my forehead now, where I fell, when he put a furze bush under the tail of a colt I was breaking. He was a droll chap, surely." There was scarcely a kind feeling in the poor man's breast. The loss of his occupation, poverty, and drink, had sadly changed the fine country lad, barely ten years older than myself, whom I had left behind in England. So, turning, I said, "Well, Joe, you don't seem to remember me; I am Charles Barnard." — "Lord, Sir!" he answered, in a whining tone, "I beg your pardon. You are a great gentleman; I always thought you would be. So, you are going to dine with Mr. John? Well, Sir, I hope you won't forget a Christmas-box, for old acquaintance sake?" I was repelled, and wished myself back in Australia; my mind began to misgive me as to the wisdom of my unexpected visit.

It was bright moonlight when we drove into the village. I had a mile to walk; I would not let chattering Joe drive me; so left him happy over a hot supper, with no stinted allowance of ale. I walked on quickly, until approaching the old house — the mansionhouse, once, but the estates had long been divided from it — I paused. My courage failed as I passed through the gate; their clang disturbed the dogs — they began to bark fiercely. I was a stranger; the dogs that knew me were all dead. Twice I paced round, with difficulty repressing my emotion, before I could find courage to approach the door. The peals of laughter, the gay music that rang out from time to time, the lights flying from window to window of the upper rooms, filled me with pleasing-painful feelings, long unknown. There was folly in my mysterious arrival; but romance is part of a life of solitude. Unreasonably, I was for a moment vexed that they could be so merry; but next moment better thoughts prevailed. I stepped to the well-remembered door, and rang a great peal; the maid opened it to me without question, for many guests were expected. As I stooped to lay aside my cloak and cap, a lovely child in white ran down the stairs, threw her arms round my neck, and, with a hearty kiss, cried, "I have caught you under the mistle-toe, cousin Alfred." Then she started from me, and loosening her hold, and staring at me with large timid brown eyes, said, — "Who are you? you are not a new uncle, are you?" Oh, how my heart was relieved! the child saw a likeness; I should not be disowned. All my plans, all my prepa-

rations were forgotten; I was in the midst of them; and after fifteen years I saw again the Christmas fire, the Christmas table, the Christmas faces, that I had dreamed of so often! To describe that night is impossible. Long after midnight, we sat; the children unwillingly left my knees for bed; my brothers gazed and wondered; my sisters crowded round me, kissed my brown-bearded cheeks, and pressed my sun-burned hands. Many new scenes of blessed Christmas may I have; never one like that which welcomed the wanderer home!

But although England has its blessed seasons and festivals, in which Christmas-day stands first; and, although that Christmas meeting will often and again be before my eyes, I cannot stay in England. My life is moulded to my adopted country; and where I have earned fortune, there I will spend it. The restraints, the conventionalities, the bonds created by endless divisions of society, are more than I can endure; care seems to sit on every brow, and scornful pride in imaginary social superiority on too many.

I have found the rosy English face, and the true English heart! Some one who listened to the Australian stories of my Christmas week, which my friends were never tired of hearing, is ready to leave all and follow me to my pastoral home. I am now preparing for departure; and neither society, nor books, nor music, will be wanting in what was, when I

first knew it, a forest and grassy desert, peopled with wild birds and kangaroos. Nearly twenty relations accompany me; some of them poor enough. In a few years you may find the Barnard-town settlement on Australian maps; and there, at Christmas time, or any time; true men and good women shall meet with welcome and help from me, for I shall never forget that I once began the world, a shepherd in a solitude, and gazed on the bright stars of a Christmas-night, shining in a hot and cloudless sky.

WHAT CHRISTMAS IS IF YOU OUTGROW IT.

THE floods round the little classic town of Bulferry were frozen. The trees round the meadows of St. Agnus Dei de Pompadour were the same. Dons went to chapel regularly, but the Dean of St. Agnus appeared in an extensive funeral-looking cloak, and the Sub-Dean coughed louder, and made more mistakes in the responses, by reason of deafness, than heretofore. Coal and Blanket Societies were talked of. In few words, Christmas was fast approaching, and University men were looking forward to spending that season in town or country, according to their residence, inclinations, or invitations.

Among the many young men who stood on the platform, awaiting the blazing dragon, which in two hours' time was to convey

them to London, perhaps to take a chop at the "Cock," a little dinner at Verrey's, and a three-and-sixpenny cab-fare to some other station, was Mr. Horace De Lisle, a freshman, who had come "up" in the preceding October, and was now hastening back to the paternal hearth at St. Maurice, a charming little vicarage in Warwickshire, just large enough to be the best house in the village, just small enough to be sociable, allowing of half-a-dozen spare beds. Practically religious, without any morbid affectation of any "isms," the Rev. Augustus De Lisle was the best and most popular parson for miles round. His income might be some four hundred a year, besides a little property in the funds; but judicious economy, and a little success in "gentleman farming," made it go very far, and St. Maurice rectory boasted its occasional dinner party, its billiard room, and its plain carriage; while few of the poor or sick ever went away unrelieved. Mrs. De Lisle was a good and clever woman, and educated her own daughters; which saved money and morals at the same time.

However, like the generality of clergymen who have not much preferment, and who really do good, the Rev. Augustus De Lisle had a large family. Girls, even when educated at home, cost something; boys cost a great deal more, and cannot be kept at home. Two or three had been got off his hands, but Horace had been a pet boy, kept at home a

good deal through ill health. He was very amiable, loved his sisters and mother, and his father had made him a capital scholar. Several people were surprised when he took the St. Agnus Dei scholarship, and took the "bounce" out of the Tipton and Whortleberry boys at the same time.

And so Horace had been sent to the University, with the promise of eighty or a hundred pounds a year from his father, an odd present of fifty from an aunt, and a lot of tears, blessings, and hints at advice from his mother. He had now passed his first term. He had made up his mind to take a "double first," the Iceland scholarship, and the English verse; he found Arnold's Thucydides a very stupid book, and wondered how it was that nothing "took" in the publishing way, unless it was "translated from the German." He believed in "stunning feeds," and began to have some ideas on the subject of claret.

But he had still far too much love for home to find even a lingering inclination for a further stay. Moreover, ambition seemed to send him homeward. The Dean had said, in a gruff voice, "Very well, Sir!" to his construing of the "Birds" of Aristophanes; the Rev. John o' Gaunt, his tutor, had expanded his lank lips into a smile, and had commended his Latin; and here was news for his father! Again, he wanted to see Jack Harrowgate, his old shooting companion, to whom his

favourite sister Lucy was engaged. Jack was a tremendous rough manly fellow, with a very kind heart, and great powers of sociability. Even Bruiser, of St. Alb-Cornice, who had thrashed the "Bunstead Grinder," shrank into insignificance when compared with Jack; and Smillington, of St. Una de Lion, could not sing, "Down among the dead men," half so well. Besides all this, Horace had some few private anxieties and doubts — of which anon.

Great as was the readiness and frequency with which slang phrases were bandied to and fro at the University, there was one little word which seemed more in use than any, and which half the University appeared to be living to illustrate.

When Horace first appeared at St. Agnus Dei, one of his first proceedings was to pay for his furniture; and to purchase the good-will of the cups and saucers of the last inmate of his rooms. Several other ready-money transactions, on a small scale, evinced his desire and intention of avoiding debt; and as his father had not only advised him to do so, but had furnished him with the means of eking out the small allowance of his scholarship, he himself felt ill-justified in overrunning his known income.

But that word was sounding, ringing, dinning, and booming in his ears, hour after hour, day after day. That word was staring in his face; whizzing before his eyes; insinuating itself into his

food; adulterating the wine he drank. It stared at him in the form of one man's boots (so much better fitting than old Last's, at St. Maurice); in the broad stripe of another man's elegantly-cut trousers; in the glossy hat of another; in the faultless, close-to-the-waste-when-unbuttoned dress coat of another. It took all sorts of forms. It would transfer itself into a walking-cane, at one end of a street; and at the end of another, it had suddenly become a plaid scarf, or a coral-headed breast-pin. Sometimes it would appear as a Yorkshire pie; sometimes as a musical box. At one moment, just as he thought it was a pair of hair-brushes, it would suddenly turn itself into a steak and oyster sauce at Cliften's. In the dreams of men, it would haunt them; in their walks, it would cling to their very feet; in their reading moments, it lay open before them; in their smoking ones, it fumed with them. And that word was tick, tick, TICK.

But Horace was not in debt. Oh no! He had only commenced a few accounts for things which "one could not very well pay for till the end of term;" and when the end of term came, he found he was obliged to write home for five pounds to come home with, and this, as it was his first term, his father thought nothing of. Then, he had "been obliged" to order "one or two things" at Stilty and Cabbagenet, the great tailor's; but there could be no harm in that, because their names

were put down on the list of tradesmen his tutor had handed him. Then, there were one or two little presents for his sisters, and a ring and a new watch-chain, which "he could pay for next term," and one or two other matters — but "nothing of consequence."

If you had seen how Horace kissed his sisters and mother, and how happy and how jolly he seemed when he got home, you would have been pleased, I think. He was certainly more manly in speech and manner, and more confident in expressing opinions; but he had lost none of his social frankness and good-nature. But Christmas was getting close at hand, and Horace, somehow or other, did not evince so lively an interest in the preparations for it as formerly. He said something in reference to "their always boring about mince-meat;" and he thought the charity-school dinner might be managed cheaper and with less trouble at the school-house, than in their own kitchen.

Moreover, his father could scarcely understand the necessity of his reading in a bright-coloured chintz gown, lined with bright red silk, although his sisters thought it very pretty. His mother was afraid that his set of studs, representing little bunches of jewelled grapes, must have been rather expensive — "But then, he had always been a quiet boy at home, and would not do so again." He also drank more wine, and once laughed about "boys

taking two glasses of port after dinner;" he ordered some pale ale up from London; and abused tea as ditch-water, alleging that it hurt his nerves, and prevented him from reading. He called his pony a "mere hack," and showed discrimination in matters relating to horse-flesh.

But all these were minor difficulties, and Horace had too much real goodness of heart to ask his father for more money, or to obtrude his artificial wants — except in fits of occasional peevishness. Besides, the Bishop of St. Epps was so pleased with his *début* at St. Agnus Dei, that he had obtained for him an "exhibition," which put another thirty pounds a-year into his pocket. This comforted him on the score of his present experiments with TICK.

Christmas passed away, merrily. The house was a perfect bower of holly; good, wholesome dinners, and lively hearty parties in the evening, "kept" the St. Maurice Christmas in genuine, downright style. And then came more junketing. Laura, thinking that there was no particular occasion to run away to the Lakes, as if marriage were a wicked action, said "yes" one evening to a curious question of Jack Harrington's, and absolutely got married next week. You may fancy what everybody said and did upon *that* occasion!

And now came the time for Horace to go back. Despite the domesticity of home, despite the absence of cold ducks at break-

fast, of claret after dinner, and of lobster salad for supper — despite the rough want of etiquette, which led Jack Harrington to dance with his own wife, to prefer the ale of the St. Maurice and the Goat to Bass or Allsopp, and to drink healths at his own dinner parties, — Horace had not found so sincere, or so soundly rational a companion at college. He went back — and with some regrets.

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It is a full three years, perhaps a trifle more, since Horace spent Christmas at his parental home. Many changes have taken place in that time. Laura is getting matronly on the strength of baby Number Two. Jack is getting additionally serious; looks more sharply after business; and gives fewer (though not less sociable) parties. The Reverend the Vicar of St. Maurice has got a small prebend, with the profits of which, he has insured his life in favour of three yet unmarried daughters. This Christmas at St. Maurice bids fair to rival all past Christmases in jollity, merriment, and social delight. Jack has just cleared a few hundreds by a lucky hit of judicious speculation, and declares he will spare no expense in celebrating baby Number One's second birth-day, which falls on "boxing" day.

But where is Horace? Will he be as sociable as he used to be? Will he come up a prodigy of scholarship and good-nature, half a don, yet with a whole and a

pected; crowds are waiting on the platform, just as they waited this time three years since, and — Horace is among them.

But which is Horace? It cannot be that young gentleman with haughty looks, a delicately-robust or robustly-delicate figure, a bundle of whips in his hand, and two Scotch terriers held in with a string! It cannot be that white-over-coated, crushed-hatted, striped-shirted individual! And yet it is he too. With whom is he talking? It cannot be — yes! it is, it must be — the Honourable Charley Cracker. Where are they going? Surely Horace will go direct home? We doubt it.

Arrived in London — a little dinner at some West End house — beat up Sprigs, now in the 12th. Two or three fellows that the Honourable Charley Cracker knows — Horace must know them. "De Lisle, of St. Agnus Dei." "Permit me to introduce you to my friend Sprigs, formerly of St. Walnuts De Grove — capital fellow — only sent away for smashing the college pump (this in an *aside*). Adjourn to the Lyceum — farce getting slow — so on to the Claret Cup, to hear Mr. Pope sing the "Cross Bones" and "O, Mrs. Manning!" Get tired, so on again to the Parthenon Saloon — no dancing — only look on — feel seedy — soda-water and brandy too light; pale ale, squeamish; porter, too heavy; and so to bed at Jarrett's Hotel. Headache — late hours in the morning — fish breakfast at Greenwich — rather

better—“may as well go home in a day or two as now,” &c., &c.

A day or two is soon gone. Horace thinks he may as well go and “look in at the governor;” and so he leaves the Honourable Charley Cracker. Honourable Charley Cracker is not a rogue or a sharper. He is merely an ass. He is a pupil of Horace De Lisle besides, who has taken to “coaching,” and is open to any eligible offer with which ten or seventeen pounds a term is connected. He quits London with a sigh, takes out his purse with another, and a deeper sigh.

Laura is as pretty a young mamma as you will meet in a long summer-day’s walk, and Horace cannot help thinking so. But he don’t like babies; and baby Number One has taken alarm at his handsomest terrier, and is squalling energetically. Jack’s old-fashioned house, with the window-door opening into a little snuggerly of flowers and vegetables, is very different to Lady De Montfaucon’s conservatory, where he used to play chess, smoke cigars, and sometimes read, with his last long vacation pupil, the future Earl of Spitalfields. At home it is much the same. There is not so much as a bottle of hock in the whole cellar; they *will* let the cat sleep on the rug in the dining-room, and the carriage is the same old-fashioned “tub” as ever.

However, he gets over baby’s birthday tolerably well, although he wishes Jack didn’t know so

many farmers. Besides, Jack *will* nurse baby Junior himself, and *will* hawk out baby Senior to shake his diminutive fists, at new comers in general. He feels glad to get back again to the rectory, but it is very slow there. His father doesn’t know the Montmorcencies, nor the Honourable Charley Cracker, and wonders why he did not get the fellowship at St. Swithin. Furthermore, Bessy and Fanny have both got beaux, and the beaux are not University men. Tom Harris, the surgeon, would never do to introduce to the Honourable Charley, although Tom has a snug little practice, and has furnished his house in a style that will outlast half a thousand University friendships, and will make Bessy a thoroughly good husband. Fanny’s intended is the new curate, who is not over High Church; in fact, Horace thinks him rather a “pump,” and wonders how he can live upon a hundred and twenty pounds a year.

Horace owes a few odd hundred pounds; but Standish and Co. and Stilty and Cabbagenet are very quiet as yet, and he will give them a “few pounds” as soon as he can spare it. In fact, half the bills have not yet been sent in, for his debts are mostly of latter-day University growth. He has done respectably well in the school, but nothing more. He has, however, a large connexion, picks up pupils, and does hope to pick up something else: indefinitely oscillating between

the living of Dumdum, in the gift of the Montmorency family (his scholarship will give him a title); something under government (he knows the Prime Minister's aunt's second cousin); and the Wool-sack. But all his friends, who used to hear him decide the fate of the Continent in a speech of twenty minutes, at the *Vox et præterea Nihil* Association, fill him with notions of briefs, oyster breakfasts, and the Temple. The difficulty is, the money. Cold-blooded as he is grown to home associations, he has no heart to rob Bessy and Fanny of the few hundreds their father can give with them; still less to stint the younger members of their just meed of what he has himself enjoyed. But he is an unhappy creature. He wants everything and everybody — except the things and people around him; he is reserved where he used to be open, parsimonious from necessity where he was once generous. He cannot settle to anything, and the few days he has been at home have bored him as much as the conversation of the Honourable Charley would have bored his father. Other people perceive the change, and even he begins to have a glimpse of self-reproach.

But, just as he is wondering why the deuce he thought of spending Christmas at home, a reprieve arrives in the shape of a letter from The Honourable Charley; who, having in an evil hour accepted an invitation to his guardian's, finds he has nobody

to smoke or drink pale ale with, and conceives a sudden desire for reading. The pay is liberal; and, if it were not, getting away from home for the remaining nine or ten days of the vacation would be a fair equivalent for any amount of instruction likely to be imbibed by the mental absorbents of Charley's mind.

Mrs. De Lisle cannot bear the idea of her "dear boy" leaving home before even the pudding is finished, especially as Jack Harrington has invited the whole family to keep Twelfth Night. Twelfth Night at Jack's! Noisy children, country dances, perhaps snap-dragon, and perhaps blind-man's buff, with sisters Bessy and Fanny slipping out on the staircase, and coming in with heightened complexions, looking as if they had been kissed by goblins in human shape. Twelfth Night characters, too! Perhaps draw a love motto with Polly Bright, the old half-pay admiral's daughter, about whom he once liked to be teased. Never!

And so Horace goes away. His father, perhaps, feels but little grieved; for he hopes and thinks that his son's journey may tend to his future advantage, and he is too sensible to cherish that homesickness which sometimes prevents a man from ever making a home for himself. But his mother cannot bear his sublime disdain of all the little innocent things that once called forth his highest approbation. She is almost afraid Polly Bright looks thin and

anxious; and she remembers that, just three years ago, Horace joked about his "little wife;" and she wishes that, even by one kind look, he had repeated the joke. It is all one to Horace, who is gone.

To be happy, Horace, or to be really merry? My friend, my friend, a word in your ear! You may be quite sure that you have grown too fast, when you find that you have outgrown Christmas. It is a very bad sign indeed.

THE ROUND GAME OF THE CHRISTMAS BOWL.

[THIS Round Game, which comes, originally, from Fairy-Land, is thus played. The Pool of the game is a capacious circular bowl, or basin, made of ice. It is some sixty or seventy feet in circumference, and all round the rim there is stuck a hedge of holly-boughs, in full berry, interspersed with coloured lamps and silver bells. Everybody who is inspired by Christmas festivities comes to put into the Pool. He is to put in something which is his pride. In doing this he generally throws in something which is equally his trouble; and thus, by doing a generous act at Christmas, in throwing away his pride, he at the same time gets rid of one of his worst troubles.]

THE RHYME.

HERE is a Pool, all made of ice,
For a great round Christmas Game!

Its rim is set with green holly boughs,
And lamps of colour'd flame;
With silver bells that tinkle and gingle
As each one his offering comes to
mingle, —

Whether ingot of gold, or a grey sea
shingle.

Who comes first? — 'T is the King, I de-
clare,

With the crown in his hand, and the frost
in his hair!

Close to the Pool he brings his crown,
And tosses it o'er the holly!

So, away to the bottom goes all his
pride,

And his royal melancholy;

While gingle! tinkle! gingle!

How the sweet bells ring!

And round about the lighted Pool

We gambol, dance, and sing!

Who comes next? —

'T is a Minister of State,

With a Puzzle made of weights and
wheels,

And balanced on his pate!

To the Pool of Christmas Offerings

The Treasury Lord advances;

Souse over, goes his Puzzle,

And away his Lordship dances!

While gingle! tinkle! gingle!

How the sweet bells ring!

And round about the lighted Pool

We gambol, dance, and sing!

Who comes next?

'T is the First Gold Stick!

With the First Cock'd Hat!

And the First General Brick!

In the Pool they toss their darlings —

Sword — hat — stick — garniture!

And retire to the *allégre*

Of the Minuet de la Cour!

But while they caper back,

Three Slaves-to-Dress advance,

In splendid, killing curls and rouge, —

The last bright thought of France!

They say — "'T is Cristmas time;

To the Round Game we will come;

Let us throw away our fashions,

And — for once — 'let's look at
home!'

While gingle! tinkle! gingle!

How the sweet bells ring!

And round about the lighted Pool

We gambol, dance, and sing!

But who comes now?

'T is the Bishop in his carriage,
Whose shoulders bear the pain and
pride

Of Church and State's mis-marriage:
A huge bale of lawn and purple
He heaves into the Pool,
And, nodding to his coachman,
Trips off, relieved and cool!

The Millionnaire comes next,
With a loan to help a war,
On the wrong side of all justice —
And his "interest" — not so sure.
He inflates — and he collapses —
His mind grows sick and dim —
Oh, the pangs of breeding money! —
His loan flutters o'er the brim!
With gingle! tinkle! gingle!
How the sweet bells ring!
As round about the lighted Pool
We gambol, dance, and sing!

Who is this in red and gold?
'T is the Soldier with his sword,
And riding on a cannon —
Bedizen'd, bless'd, adored!
Round his neck he wears a chain,
For a show and a pretence,
But engraved with fiery letters
Claiming blind obedience:
His pride and bane are loosed —
They fly o'er the holly fence!

Next, a Lawyer, with his costs —
Making full a thousand pounds,
With a score of breaking hearts,
And five years of waste and wounds.
His face is cold and wretched —
His life is but a span —
A red tape-worm, at the best,
In a black coat stuff'd with bran:
He tosses o'er his bill of costs! —
He is quite another man!
With gingle! tinkle! gingle!
How the sweet bells ring!
And round about the lighted Pool
We gambol, dance, and sing!

The Merchant brings his bargain,
Which would beggar half a town; —
The Schemer shows a "spec,"
But deserves each good man's frown; —
The Scholar brings his book,
Where his soul, all moulting, lies; —
The Poet brings his laurel
And his castle in the skies; —
The Lover brings his mistress
Who has treated him with scorn; —

The Shepherd brings his favourite lamb,
With its curly fleece unshorn; —
All these into the Pool
Are cast, with various smarts,
As valued Christmas Offerings,
Inspired with Christmas hearts!
While gingle! tinkle! gingle!
How the sweet bells ring!
And round about the lighted Pool
We gambol, dance, and sing!

[The crowd of players at the Game, having joined hands in this concluding dance, now whirl round the Pool of Ice, gambolling and singing; and they continue to do this, till the charm begins to work, and the heat of the Christmas hearts outside causes the Offering which each has thrown in, to warm to such a genial glow, that the heat thus collectively generated, melts the ice. The Pool gradually dissolves — the players of the game, one after another, sink down exhausted, and fall into a delightful reverie; while the melted Pool overflows, and floats every one of them to his home, as he seems to lie in a mother-of-pearl boat, with a branch of holly at the prow, and a coloured lamp amidst the green leaves and red berries. Each one, soon after, recovers his senses just enough to find himself lying comfortably in bed, and listening to the waits!]

THE HOME OF THE HUNDRED BLIND MEN.

IN the city of my birth, there stood an ancient building, known as Prior's College, founded in remote antiquity for the reception

of one hundred blind men. The entrance was in the High Street. It was a door-way cut in a red-bricked wall, without a porch, and surmounted by a broken and almost obliterated carving in stone, of the arms of the founder. Two walnut trees, separated only from this entrance by a narrow pavement, also of red bricks, made a shade there in the summer time. When a boy, I strayed there, often, leaning on the low gate, and looking into the quadrangle beyond. Its inmates were seldom met about the city; but I used to see them within, walking on the grass-plot. The singular foundation of Prior's College, or "Prior's Spital," as old people called it, was told to me in very early childhood, before I rightly understood the words, when I heard them only with a childish wonderment; so that long after, in life, a habit of repeating them without direct reference to their meaning had taken from the words all power, but that of awakening the vague sensation with which they were connected in my childhood. Yet now, as I repeat them, they have to me many meanings, which other ears know not of. Manifold associations belong to them. I remember now, more distinctly than any other day in that early time of my life, an afternoon, when I stood at the gate, as I have often done since. A voice behind me startled me by inquiring what the building was intended for. I turned, and replied immediately, "It is for the reception of one hundred blind

men." The inquirer was a stranger. His clothes were dusty, and he looked tired; and when he had peeped over the gate, and looked up at the sculptured shield, he passed on. I felt that afternoon, more strongly than I had felt before, the charm that was for me in that ancient place. I stayed there until dusk, and then walked away, repeating to myself, mechanically, the answer I had given to the stranger. Many occurrences which have wrought changes in my mind, more easily traceable at the time, must have passed from my recollection since then; and yet that day seems to me, as it were, the opening of my life, and all beyond it as the shady background of a scene which has never faded from my memory. And, indeed, the influence of that day upon my subsequent life, if difficult to trace, is only so because the impression which it left was deeper. I know that to my interest in the old College, in my childhood, which brought me that way whenever I had an opportunity, and to the awe with which I heard some stories respecting it, I owe much of what I became, and am.

It was long before I ventured to pass in at the gate, for I knew no one there; although, probably, none would have interfered with me, if I had passed in. But I was timid; and the glimpses I caught from without of its inmates walking to and fro, or sitting in shady angles of the walls, and a certain feeling of awe I had in the thought

that the place was inhabited almost entirely by aged and blind men, restrained me. I preferred to loiter under the trees; to peep in occasionally over the gate; to look up at the carving of arms, and at the loophole windows in the wall along the street.

One day, an old gentleman, whom I had sometimes remarked there, as not being blind like the other inmates of the College, seeing me as usual at the gate, bade me enter. His manner was so sharp that I half feared that he was going to reprimand me for lingering about there so often; but, to my surprise, he only asked me my reason for doing so. I do not remember what I said to him; but I recollect that he seemed to be inclined to be friendly to me, and led me over the building. It was a different place to what I thought it from the outside. I looked round the quadrangle; at the square windows with little diamond panes; at the great sun-dial with a Latin inscription; at the curious leaden rain-spouts, ornamented with grinning faces of animals; at the sloping tiled roofs, greyer than the stone walls, under which the swallows built their nests in a close row. We passed through a little doorway in the further corner of the quadrangle into a passage, from which my conductor showed me a great hall, which had once been used as a schoolroom, though now it was the place where the inhabitants of the College came together for prayers. He showed me also a

ruined archway at the back, covered with ivy, which led into the gardens of the College. Afterwards, we visited some of the blind men, and talked with them. They occupied the building on three sides of the quadrangle. My conductor lived on the other side. The entrance to his abode was by an oaken door in the corner. The name of Alison was under the knocker, on an oval brass plate, although much polishing had almost obliterated the letters. I observed that the windows on that side were much larger than the others, and were of stained glass, in the shape of a pointed arch. I remember saying to my guide, "Is that a chapel, too, Sir?"

"No, youngster," he replied, "that is the library."

"Do blind people want a library, Sir?" I asked him, innocently.

The old gentleman looked at me with some sternness, and then said, "It is not for the blind people, youngster. Old Prior, a mercer in King Henry the Sixth's time, founded here, not only a hospital for blind men, but a library for men who were willing to turn the blessed gift of sight to good account. The old mercer's gift, however, is half buried here, and most of the books are very old."

He knocked at the door, and we were admitted by a very old woman, whom I afterwards knew to be his housekeeper. He led me afterwards into the library. It was a long and narrow room, lined from end to end with books. Half way between the ceiling and the

ground was a narrow gallery; at the farther end of the room, in a corner, stood a table with several massive inkstands; against the wall, stood an upright desk and stool. The place was made rather dark by the stained glass windows; and there was a faint smell from the leathern binding, but the books were not dusty, and the oaken floor was polished smooth as glass.

"And are all these real books, Sir?" I asked; for the ribbed leathern backs, and the red labels of the old folios looked so fresh and shining, that I was reminded of a draughtboard at home, which shut up like two thick volumes, and was labelled with the title of some standard author.

"All real books, my friend," replied my guide.

I walked around the walls, looking up at the titles of the volumes, while the old gentleman sat at the desk and began to write. I remember that I felt much inclined to take down one of the volumes and open it; but on turning round to glance at my conductor, before asking his permission, he seemed to be so much occupied, that I was afraid to disturb him; so I continued to amuse myself with reading the titles, walking slowly from place to place on tiptoe. I looked round once, as I ceased to hear the scratching of his pen upon the paper, and then I saw him with his arm supported on the desk, and his face resting on his hand, looking very thoughtful. He was

tall and thin. His head was partially bald, and his hair was brushed up from all sides of it, to a point on the top of his head. He wore a white cravat, and the collars of his coat and waistcoat standing upright, and cut with sharp angles over the chest, gave him the air of a Quaker, though he did not speak like one. I waited a long while, while he sat as motionless as a portrait — his face still resting on his hand. It was getting dusk, but I would not make the slightest movement to call his attention to me: indeed, there was something so pleasing to me in the tranquillity of the place, and the novelty of my situation, in the remotest part of the old College about which I had so often lingered, wondering what the interior was like, that I felt at every moment a fear lest he should come out of his reverie, and lead me back to the outlet into the street. He arose at last, and took me again into the house, where he talked to me about the College and about the library, and finally dismissed me, bidding me come to see him again one day.

Of the Warden's history, nothing was known. There were few who could remember his first coming there, and at that time they had not felt sufficient interest in him to inquire whence he came. He had no relation or acquaintance in the city — or indeed elsewhere, for anything that people knew. The College was his home, and he seldom left it, except now and then to pay a tradesman's bill in

the city, or to buy a few books at an old Divinity bookseller's in the Cathedral-yard. It was not long before I presented myself again at the College, according to his words on leaving him. I found him this time even more friendly towards me than before. He questioned me, and learning that my mother was a widow, asked how she lived, and what she intended to make of me, and kindly offered to employ me in the library, and partly in assisting him in keeping the accounts of the College. "I shall not want all your time," he said, "and you will have many opportunities of acquiring knowledge, if you are studious." His offer was joyfully accepted, both by my mother and me, and in a few days I found myself installed in the library.

My duties were light, and my leisure time was spent in reading. By degrees, I learned to write labels for books in print letters, and even in foreign characters; and sometimes I employed myself in supplying title-pages, or missing leaves: which I made from other copies, and inserted in the books. In the winter, we began to make a catalogue of all the books in the library: which task my employer finally left entirely to me. It occupied me a long time; yet I was sorry when it was finished. I had become so accustomed to my daily task, alone among the old books, that I scarcely knew how to employ my time when I found myself less occupied. However, I soon turned again to

reading, with a greater relish than before. The library contained many theological books. I acquired a taste for the writings of the old English Divines, whose profuse imagery and poetic fervour awakened in me, as I grew older, a calm enthusiasm which brought my nature still more into harmony with the tranquil life around me. Within those old walls I seemed to be shut in, and sheltered for ever from the changing world without. I became familiar with old dates, and obsolete languages, with old prints, and other ancient things, until my acquaintance with them, predominating over my experience of actual life, the past became even less strange and shadowy than that life of change and motion beyond the little circle in which I lived.

In this way I grew up to manhood. I had no definite aim in the future. My mother's wants were provided for; and the little salary which I received was sufficient to keep me free from those worldly cares which would have aroused me from my inaction. Even the vague notion, which I had entertained at first, that the knowledge I was acquiring would, one day, become the ladder by which I should climb into a higher sphere, entered my mind no longer. I came to love learning only for itself, as the daily material of my thoughts — the many-coloured yarn from which I wove my dreams. In turning out of the street into the enclosure of the

College, I seemed to have found a shelter, which others had overlooked, in their struggle onward. I became more and more monkish. The tranquillity about me had so driven my mind inward to its centre, that no occurrence in my daily life could draw me out of myself. Even the death of a friend failed to leave in me any permanent impression. I had no sympathies with men, none of those affections which are half the life of a mind not warped from its natural development. But, one day, my life began to be changed.

I remember that it was in the autumn of the year; for I had been writing in the library, until dusk, and straining my eyes to finish what I was doing, before the light wholly failed. When I had done, I returned my books to their shelves, and went out. There was a long passage on that side of the hall, flanked, like the hall itself, with Gothic windows looking out into the gardens of the College. As I locked the library door, and held my hand upon the key, I turned and saw a female form ascending the flight of steps, at the bottom. I stood looking that way as she came towards me. Her white dress seemed to make a light about her in the dusky passage, so that I could see her face. I did not wonder at first to meet her there, but saw her, as in dreams, sometimes, we come on unexpected things, without surprise. She passed me without speaking, and turning an angle in the passage, was gone. I stood there for

some time, hoping that she might return, and wondering whence she came, and who she was. I had never seen a young maiden in the College before; nor could I imagine how I should meet her in that part of the building, unless she were staying with the Warden; and he, I knew, lived only with his housekeeper, and never had a visitor.

I pondered upon this circumstance on my way home, suspecting that it was a vision that I had seen. I had been reading, that day, the story of an ancient hero, who finding an old decrepid woman, a leper, by the way-side, took her up upon his saddle, and bore her with him into a city. And that night, lying on his bed, he was awakened by a great light, and saw a girl in the room, who promised him a crown of glory for the act; but vanished as he stretched forth his hand. When I reflected, there seemed to me in the description of the knight's vision, so much resemblance to the form that I had seen, and the effect that it had wrought upon me, that one seemed to have grown out of the other. I thought of the solitary life that I was leading, and considered this circumstance with uneasiness, as indicative of an unhealthy state of my mind. Yet I felt a pleasure in recalling it; which increased as I indulged it. I sat again the next day in the library until late, and went out by the same passage, hoping to meet her. I lingered there some time, but she did not come. As I was locking the door,

and turning to walk away, I heard a footstep on the stair below. I stood still, and waited anxiously; but when it came nearer, I knew that it was the old Warden's. I spoke to him first; for it was dark, and he could scarcely see me. I was about to tell him of the young person whom I had met, but his manner was so short, that I was deterred. He spoke to me of some books in the library which were to be lent to a person in the city, and then asked me why I stayed so late. I said I had been busy; he bade me good night, somewhat abruptly, and went on.

I was at a loss to account for the sudden coolness of his manner. He was accounted a churlish man, but towards me he had generally preserved a friendly bearing, and I could not help perceiving that I had been a favourite of his. He was, indeed, somewhat eccentric, and I had frequently before known him to be subject to shifting humours; but I felt this time that there was something more than usual. For several weeks past he had not invited me into his house, as had been his custom, now and then; although I had not experienced any change in his manner. I sought, in vain, to remember any occasion on which I could have offended him; and I resolved to wait for an opportunity of asking him, in what I had displeased him.

I did not see him again, however, for several days. One afternoon, when I was sitting in the library, I heard two of the blind inmates

of the College talking under the window, which was open; and from their conversation I gained some clue to the mystery of the young person whom I had met. I knew them by their voices. He who seemed better informed upon the subject than his companion, was one of the oldest men there. He was short, and somewhat bent, but thickset; and was said to possess great strength. He used to wear a kind of cloth frock, buttoned down the whole length of the front, and he used to walk with a stick with which I once saw him, with a single blow, beat a dog to death who had bitten him. I had always a fear of him. I had scarcely ever heard him speak, that he was not giving vent to general bitterness, or anger against some one, and there was an expression of malice in his large and hard features, which made me shrink from him. I had found him, sometimes, at evening, in the quadrangle walking alone; sometimes, when I had met him, coming through the passage leading to the ancient schoolroom, and groping along the wall — his face with its fixed and sightless eyes inclined forward, a feeling almost of terror had compelled me to turn back. I believe that on such occasions he had detected my footstep, with the quick sense of the blind; and that knowing who I was, and divining that I felt a dislike for him, he had treasured up malice against me. "I thought I heard a woman's footstep in the dining-hall, last night," he said

now, "but I suppose I was mistaken; for no one answered when I spoke, and I didn't hear it again. My hearing used to be sharp, but lately I have had a singing in the ears. I am not deaf, but I get to fancy noises."

"Like enough," said the other, "it was old Alison's niece, Amy. Be sure she heard you; and so she would not answer! She is afraid of an old blind man. Somebody taught her, I'll be sworn, when she was a child, that old, deformed, halt, or blind people are spiteful, and to be hated. If you had been young, like the boy he took into the library, she would not have run away."

"The Warden's niece!" said his companion. "I never heard of her; or else I have forgotten her. My memory is not what it was."

"No, no, man: you never heard of her. She has not been here many days. The housekeeper told me about her. Her uncle never saw her, until his sister, the widow, died — that's two years since; and he did not trouble himself about her, after that, until a little while ago: when he went to see her, and brought her home, to live with him in the College."

"Aye?" said the first speaker, "and the young man?"

"We shall know about him by-and-bye," said the other. "The young despise the old, but they can't do without the old. Let them go their own way. They will

not escape trouble in this life, any more than we."

I did not doubt that I had discovered the explanation of the mystery, and that it was the old man's niece whom I had seen: and yet, I could not account for the fact that he had never spoken to me about her; and it seemed to me even still more strange that I should not have met her more than once, in the many days that she had been there. I suspected that the Warden took precautions to prevent my meeting her, although I could not tell why. His having ceased to invite me into the house, and his apparent anger at meeting me late in the passage, knowing, as perhaps he did, that she passed there sometimes, at that hour, confirmed my suspicion. Nor was the remark of the old blind man, that he had found a new favourite, sufficient, to my mind, to explain the sudden abruptness of his manner towards me. "There is no doubt," I thought, "that, for some reason, he fears our coming together."

This conviction kept her constantly in my mind. A fancy that some foreshadowing of a closer connexion, inevitably to exist between us, had visited her protector, awakened strange sensations in my mind. I revived again and again the recollection of her pale face and black hair, and the kind of awe which I had felt at meeting her alone, and with her bare head, walking in the twilight passage, where I had never before met a stranger.

I became more impatient to see her again, and thought upon various means by which I might be able to meet her, without fixing on any. At last, it came to pass that one evening, as I was leaving the College, I saw the Warden standing at his door, who told me, for the first time, that he had brought a niece to reside with him, and, bidding me enter, offered to introduce me to her. I followed him into the parlour, where I found her at needlework. She dropped her work as I entered, and arose to meet me. I knew her again for the person whom I had met in the passage, although she seemed less pale than then. I thought that the old man glanced from me to her, several times, as he told her who I was. When we sat down, I felt that he was watching me, and from the constraint which I experienced, I spoke little. She talked to me about the College and its inhabitants, going on with her work the while, and looking down upon it: though once or twice she looked up, and turned upon me the full beauty of her countenance. I departed at last, and bade her "good night."

So was I now made sure that it was no vision that I had seen; though still her marvellous beauty preserved in me something of the old wonder that I had felt. More than ever, did she now become to me the spirit of that place, to which my instinct had so strangely brought me in my childhood. I thought, even at that time, that her presence would not have

moved me so deeply, if I had met her elsewhere. I knew that I might have seen her in the street, and looking at her with a momentary wonder, might have fallen again into my habitual meditation; for though I could easily imagine beautiful faces, I could remember no occasion on which any particular countenance had deeply impressed me before.

I saw her again, a few days after, in the College gardens. It was in the morning; I walked there sometimes in fine weather, before beginning my duties in the library. The mist of an autumn morning had passed with a few heat-drops, and the air under the trees was still and warm. I was about to turn back, and go into the library, when I heard her voice. She came through the archway, and walked down a side path slowly, beside one of the blind people. I recognised her companion for the man whom I had heard under the window of the library, talking with his surly friend. I saw her gather some peaches for him from the wall, and could hear them conversing, though I could not distinguish what they said. When the old man left her, I walked round, and bade her "good morning."

"I came down here with the old blind man," said she. "Poor fellow! he tells me he would not regret his blindness, if he were not getting deaf."

"It is well," I replied, "that sometimes the afflicted know not the extent of their misfortune."

"Yet, they tell me the blind are sometimes very happy."

"I do not think," said I, "that a man can be happy, having once known the light, to be shut out from it for ever. I cannot tell what beauty the mind has in itself, alone, nor how great a pleasure it may derive, in the cases of those born blind, from self-contemplation, or from such faint intimations of the world as are brought to it through the dark senses."

"They are very fanciful. Yonder poor old man thought that I had heard him call to me in the hall, and that I would not speak to him. I led him down here to take a walk in the garden, and make my peace with him. I own I was timid until I became more used to the blind men — they moved about so silently, and I came upon them so often, unawares, in parts of this beautiful place. But I forget, Sir, that to you it may wear a different aspect; now to me, who came to it, young as I am, after years of trouble and sorrow, and find in it a quiet home, governed by my good uncle, it seems a place where one must needs be happy."

"I hope, indeed, you will be happy here."

"Ah, yes! I have already known a tranquillity in this place which I have never known before — not, indeed, since I was so young that I have almost forgotten it. And my uncle, whom some people have thought harsh. They do not know what a gentle and affectionate nature lies under that sharp manner, which he has sometimes with

strangers. And because he loved retirement, and from disappointment in his youth shut himself up here, and seldom came to see us, they said that he hated men. We did not say so; for my mother knew him better."

"Let me add, that I know him better," said I. I looked at her again for some moments in silence, thinking that I could read something of the sorrow that she spoke of, in the expression of her face. She glanced at me once more with a look of curiosity; and then bidding me "good morning," turned and went through the archway, leaving me alone.

About a week after that morning, the winter began suddenly. The weather had continued to be fine and calm — although we were at the end of October — until one evening, as I was returning from the College, I felt the air strike chill; and that night, I was awakened by a high wind turning the sails of a windmill, near the back of our house, with a noise like the roaring of the sea. In the morning, the trees about and within the College were stripped of their leaves; and the wind continued all day to drive the clouds across the sky; and the dusk came on earlier than usual. I had not seen Amy since, although I had walked again in the garden. I sat all day, thinking of the long winter before us, and of the many months that must pass before I could walk with her again in the garden. I paced to and fro in the library, and, from the window, looked out into the qua-

drangle, and watched the leaves as the wind whirled them in eddies, or swept them up in corners and doorways. When it became dark, I went out, and seeing no one, I passed by the Warden's door, and listened at the window for Amy's voice. The firelight shone through the holes in the shutters, and I could hear speaking. Sometimes I could plainly distinguish the housekeeper's voice; and sometimes, I thought, the voices of Amy and her uncle. I turned away and went home, feeling a loneliness that I had never known before.

Every night I saw the same light through the Warden's window; and picturing to myself the scene within, felt this loneliness more strongly than before.

And still I saw nothing of Amy. Sometimes her uncle visited me in the library; but he never again invited me into the house. His manners were still strange: so strange at times, that I thought I observed some signs of a falling away from that shrewd and practical mind which I had always known him to possess. His manner with me had become habitually querulous; sometimes he seemed forgetful and almost childish. One day, remarking that it was the twelfth of the month, he repeated the words, and stood musing awhile.

"This should be my birthday," said he. "Let me see! The twelfth! I am eighty-one, and I have been here fifty years; and, indeed, this winter I feel myself getting old — too old for work.

And why should I harass myself with work? I will go away from here. Yet Amy likes the place; and perhaps I have been here too long to leave it now. The duties are getting irksome to me: but I must stay. Yes, Amy likes the place, and she is a good girl — she is the comfort of my life."

He did not address his words to me, though I sat beside him; but he stood looking towards one of the windows, as if speaking to himself. I would not interrupt him. There was something that touched me in the sound of his voice, and in the thoughtful expression of his features; nay, even in his attitude, as he stood there, tall and thin, as an afternoon shadow, undecided whether to go or to stay. It was a curious thought, but it struck me that I had found the key to his childishness, in his sudden affection for his niece. I thought that he might have gone on yet for many years in that round of habit in which he had lived, carrying on his duties almost mechanically, if nothing had occurred to disturb him, even after the intelligence which originally directed them was partially extinguished. But this feeling of affection, so long benumbed, and awakened thus late in life, had brought forth his true nature, and shown that he was become a child. He turned away, afterwards, and, without saying a word, walked slowly down the length of the library, and went out, leaving me there.

The weather became colder.

After three dark days, the wind dropped, and the snow began to fall, slowly covering everything until it lay deep in the quadrangle, and on the roofs and porches of the doors, and on the rain-spouts, and window-ledges, and on the gnomon of the sun-dial. No one stirred abroad then; sometimes no footstep but my own was imprinted in the snow all day. It ceased to fall at last, but the weather was still cold. On the afternoon of that day, I read in the library by lamp-light, and, going out afterwards, the moon was shining. That side where I stood was in shadow; but the moonlight shone upon the opposite wall, and made a broad line before the doors. As I looked across, I saw one of the doors of the blind inmates' habitations, open, and Amy come out. She heard me try the lock to see if the door was fast, and called to me. She held the door almost closed behind her, and said, as I approached:

"My old friend is very ill. The cold weather is more than he can bear. Come in and see him."

She opened the door, and I entered with her. The old man lay upon his trestle bed-stead, near the fire; beside him, on the table, were some medicine-bottles. He raised his head, and seemed to listen at my approach; then, sunk again upon his pillow.

"Here is some one you know come to see you," said Amy, leaning over him.

"Aye, aye," he replied. "It is Mr. Elwood. I am much obliged

to him." I walked over, and shook hands with him. He was very old, and his trembling hand was tawny brown, and drawn up by paralysis at the knuckles.

"Has he no one to attend on him but you, Amy?" said I.

"Not now," she said. "I sent his nurse away to-day, for speaking to him harshly. The house-keeper and I will watch him to-night in turns."

She turned towards the door, and begging me to wait there a moment, while she ran home, went out and shut the door noiselessly. When she came back, her uncle was with her, and I appealed to him to allow me to watch the old man instead of Amy; but Amy pleaded her friendship for her charge, and begged to be allowed to stay.

"No, no, no," said her uncle. "You must come home, Amy. The young, and beautiful, and tender-hearted are not fit for nurses. The old are sterner, but they know what to do, and do it, if they do not feel for the sick. But you are inexperienced — and you would sit and grieve all night. Come, you are not strong yourself; and if you were to die, I know not what I should do." I saw a tear upon the old man's face. Amy saw it too; she said not a word in answer, but bidding the sick man be patient, turned, and gave me "good night," and then took her uncle's arm, and went away with him.

The hours passed slowly, as I sat before the fire. I sat upon a

low chair looking into the live coals. Sometimes I buried my face in my hands, and thought of Amy; but with a feeling of anxiety, for which I could scarcely account. I felt, almost instinctively, that the love of the old man for his niece, though of a different kind to mine, was yet destined to thwart me, and perhaps to part us in the end for ever. I had a habit of trusting to such instincts, for I knew they were, in fact, the subtlest deductions of the mind, though working blindly, and with facts noted in secret, and in secret stored. I knew the power of the old man upon her, bound to him as she was by feelings of gratitude and affection, and I feared lest some prejudice, arising from that childish querulousness which he seemed to display towards all but her, might lead him to speak harshly of me, or to forbid her holding converse with me. Knowing how he had hitherto kept her from meeting me, I imagined many plans which he might devise, acting under a childish apprehension, in order to remove her from me.

It must have been near midnight, when I heard a knock at the door, and going there, found Amy.

"I came over before going to bed, to ask how he is," she said.

"He has slept, ever since you left."

"I have brought you a book, and the housekeeper will come and take your place early in the morning. Good night."

"Good night, Amy."

She glided like a ghost over the silencing snow, and was gone. I waited there awhile, looking towards the house, until I saw a light at her window; soon afterwards the blinds were dark, and I returned and sat down again, to read before the fire. The housekeeper came at last, and wrapping my cloak about me, I went home.

The old man continued ill for some days. I was at his habitation constantly, meeting Amy there. The nights were moonlight still; and many times I saw her flit to and fro between her uncle's door and his, and sometimes through the outlet into the street. I seldom saw any one else but her now. The snow was not thawed; the icicles hung to the water-taps and the rain-spouts, and along the gutters under the roof. The shadows were heavier by their contrast with the light upon the snow, and the projections and angles of walls were blacker and more sharp. And, all day long, the silence was so perfect, that it seemed to me that only Amy dwelt there, and I lived entranced; for, never, in the calmest and remotest region of my fancy, had I built a home more pure and beautiful—a habitation, to my mind, more fit for her. The old man had been lying ill a fortnight, when one afternoon I was as usual in the library, and Amy came through to me. I had been absent some hours, and had just returned, so that she had sought me there, perhaps, before. I

looked up at her, before she spoke, and said:

"The old man is dead?"

"He is," said Amy. "The chaplain found him lying still, and said he had passed from darkness into light."

There were tears in her eyes. I watched her, as she stood there, silent, for some moments, keeping in my ear the words that she had spoken. The solemn news that she had brought me, and her sorrowing attitude, had given to her an air so beautiful and saintlike that my love rose within me to its height. She came, at length, and held out her hand, to shake hands with me. She had not done so before. She did so, now, in that feeling which leads us, when we turn away from death, to draw more closely to the living, and to treat with kindness those whom we have yet to speak with. I took her hand, and did not let it go; but walked with her to the door leading into the passage, where I had seen her first. I held the handle of the door, but did not turn it. I knew that now the poor old man was dead, I should not see her every day, as heretofore; nay, I thought then that her uncle, alarmed at the accident which had lately brought us together so often, would guard her more cautiously than ever. It seemed to me that all the future hung upon that moment, and that if hastily opened the door, she was gone from me for ever.

"Do not leave me yet, Amy. Do you not know, that though I pass

each day in the same place with you, we may not meet again for many, many days?"

"I know it. I will not deceive you."

"Amy," I said, after a pause — "because you leave me, now perhaps, as you yourself have said, not to meet again for some time — I cannot part with you before I tell you what is heavy on my heart. Dear Amy, it might seem to some a selfish thing to talk of love, which means life and confidence, and thoughts of happiness, at this time, when death has been with us; and yet an instinct tells me that no moment were more fit than this — an instinct, safer to be trusted, as I hope, than the shrewdest precepts. Forgive me! It is not many months since I first met you in the passage here, about this time of dusk. Something, I know not what, has happened to prevent our meeting often; but many things have come together, in those few times that we have met, to show me your true nature. Believe me, Amy, it is not only for your beauty, but for your goodness, and your wisdom, that I love you."

She looked at me calmly, and answered: "You give me credit for good sense, and though you flatter me, and call it wisdom, I will show you, at least, that I have learned to speak frankly is best. I will tell you, then, that I know no one whom I could love more sincerely than you; nay, I will not hide, that, although our acquaintance has been short, I feel an af-

fection for you, stronger than I have felt for any one. I have had but little leisure for such feelings before this. I came here thinking to find all things strange and cold, and found a new and happier life before me. Old and young treated me so kindly, that my heart was fuller than I could say."

I took her hand, and kissed it fervently. "I did not think to hear you speak like this, Amy," I said; "but your uncle!"

"My uncle!" repeated Amy, looking down to the ground, as if I had struck again the key-note of our conversation, and had brought her back to the tone in which it began. "What do I not owe him! You must scarcely speak to me of this again. I have said to you more than I should have said; for I have promised him never to marry while he lives. Therefore I hold you to no promise; although it is well, perhaps, that we should wait. For his sake, we must not tell him of this; for it would grieve him. Now let me say, farewell."

"Let me kiss you, before we part, Amy!" said I, as we were near the threshold of the outlet. She held her cheek out, and I kissed it twice; but in that moment I felt that the doorway became darker, although I had heard no footstep. I turned and saw that it was the old blind man, whom I had once heard talking under the library window. He stood in the middle of the threshold, holding the frame on each side the door, as Samson held the pillars — his

head bowed towards us, as if he had been about to enter, and hearing some one there, had stood to listen. Amy shrieked faintly.

"I did not mean to frighten you, Miss," said he; "I know I am not a well-favoured man, but if you will let me pass you, I will be gone."

"It was your sudden coming that startled us," said I.

"I did not know," replied the old man, "that there was any one here." He felt with his hand along the wall, and went up the steps. We heard his footsteps in the passage, and then a door shut, and the place was silent again. We stood there yet some time before we parted. I waited until Amy was gone, and then went out into the quadrangle. It was a dark night.

Oh, I was indeed another man that night! All my old nature fell from me; and I stood then, for the first time, face to face with life. I would be a dreamer no longer. There was something to me so beautiful in humanity, as I saw it through her wise and noble nature, that all the old pleasures of my imagination seemed as a drunken revel, from which I awakened to the clear fresh morning of the heart. I saw now, for the first time, that it was well, as Amy said, to wait; for what had I to keep a wife? But I was full of hope; and I felt a strength within me, that would master circumstances. "It is enough," I thought, "that Amy loves me. I will wait, and she shall see how I will strive

to make her happy, when the time arrives."

As I expected, I did not see her again until the day of the old man's funeral, and then only for a moment. I met the Warden the next day, and spoke to him of the old man; he answered me sharply, and seemed irritated.

"The old are better dead," said he. "In this life, where all are battling together, what chance have they against the young? If they have anything of value, jealous and quick-eyed, the young will watch it for an opportunity to rob them, or wait about them, hungry for their deaths, to seize upon it. They grudge even a kind companion, who might make their last days happy — who might serve to waken an affection, that would make them feel that they yet lived, not wholly numbed by this slow age that creeps upon us all. But the old are over-cunning for them sometimes. They have a weapon, if they know how to use it."

I knew what he referred to, and suspected that the blind man had betrayed us: but I made no answer, for Amy's sake, although I was grieved to hear him talk like this, for he had often treated me kindly. Moreover, I could not help pitying him, for I felt that his strange fancies had moved him deeply. His words were bitter, but his voice broke sometimes, as if he felt acutely the injustice which he thought he suffered. He turned away as soon as he had finished, and departed, scarcely

leaving me time to reply. His threat alarmed me; but I had faith in Amy. She came to me in the library that afternoon, as I was about to leave. She seemed agitated.

"I fear my uncle has been speaking to you harshly," said she. "I came to shake hands with you before you go, and to bid you not to let it grieve you."

"No, no, Amy," I answered; "I will bear anything while you remain unchanged."

"Promise me, then," she said, "whatever may happen, that you will not judge me harshly. For myself, I shall not change; but if *you* should grow weary of waiting, I will forgive you and will not complain."

"Never, never, Amy!" I held her hand in mine a moment, and then released it, and she glided down the library.

Her manner had alarmed me. I could not rest that night, but lay awake, foreboding many evils; yet I never touched the truth, although some trouble, in the distance, seemed to threaten me. I rose early next morning, and hastened to the College. There was no one in the quadrangle; and looking towards the Warden's house, I saw the shutters closed, and the blind still down at Amy's window. I walked over, and listened, but heard no noise within; knocking at the door, I waited and listened again: but the silence of death seemed in the house. A terrible thought struck me, as I stood there, striving to

catch some sound, with an intense attention. The wildness of the old man's manner overnight seemed to me a symptom of that sudden madness, under the influence of which, sometimes, the gentlest natures have done deeds of violence to those whom they have loved the most.

I did not seek for any one to aid me, but turned and went along the passage, and through the library, to get that way into the Warden's house. The door was not locked. I went through. I stood a moment, and listened again. I could have heard the slightest breathing, if any one had been sleeping in the house. I heard nothing. I mounted the stairs, and knocked at Amy's door, and pushed it open. I saw she had not slept there, the previous night; there was no article of clothing about the walls, nor any of her trinkets on the table. I went to the old man's room next, and afterwards to the house-keeper's, and found both empty. Down stairs I found no one. Everything belonging to the inmates seemed to be removed, and nothing left there but the furniture: which was the property of the College. A ray of sunlight, full of dusky specks, fell through the hole in the shutters of the back-room, and I sat some time upon a chair there, sick at heart, and utterly bewildered.

They were gone, and none knew whither. No one in the College had heard them go, nor could I find about the city any one who

had helped them to remove what they had taken with them. I wandered in the streets that day, and about the market-place that night, vaguely hoping to meet some trace of them; and so, from day to day. Afterwards, I haunted the College continually: lingering there, sometimes, till late at night. Certain Trustees visited the place, and told me that the old man had sent in his accounts on the day on which he left, stating that he was compelled to leave the city that night. His letter had shown them that he wrote under some excitement, and he had not stated whither he was going. They requested me to take his duties on myself, until another Warden could be appointed. Afterwards, some clergymen in the city who had frequented the library, spoke to them favourably of me, and, in the end, I was appointed Warden in the old man's stead.

My mother came to live with me in the house which he had occupied. I did not doubt, at first, that I should one day hear of Amy again; and that her coming to bid me farewell, on the night on which she had left, and what she had said then, was intended to assure me of this; but a whole year passed, and spring came, and summer came, and I had no news of her. The hope of seeing her grew faint within me. I even reproached her, sometimes, in my mind. I fell again into my old way. The change had not been long enough to turn aside the bias of my past life altogether. The place was so little

changed, and my daily life was so like what it had so long been, that, gradually, the time when Amy lived there seemed to me only like a tale that I had been reading. Sometimes, on awakening from some long train of meditation, I recollected that I had not thought of Amy for some days; and wondered at it, knowing how deeply I had loved her—knowing how deeply I loved her still.

I had begun a work upon the antiquities of the city—a wearisome task in the beginning, but when my researches were completed, and my work began to grow into shape, I laboured upon it with ardour. It was upon this that I was engaged, one afternoon. My mother had been sitting with me in the library. She had gone out, and I had sat there alone, I know not how long, wholly absorbed in my task. That moment is stronger in my memory than any other of my life. I remember waiting for some time, with a half-consciousness of some movement near the door that led into the passage. I did not raise my eyes; but after a time, the belief that there was some one there, grew stronger, and I looked up, and saw Amy standing before me.

The door was closed behind her, and she stood there, still, and dressed in deep mourning. I kept my eyes upon her, arose, and walking over to her, put forth my hand to touch her, wondering.

“Oh, Amy, is it you, indeed?” I pressed her to me firmly, and kissed her, and leaning my head

upon her shoulder, wept for joy. She, too, wept. “This moment has blotted out from my memory all the time that you have been away, Amy. It seems to me only last night that you bade me farewell in this very place. It has been a hard trial.”

“For both,” said Amy. “I told my uncle I would stay by him while he lived; and I have kept my promise.”

“He is dead?”

She did not answer me; but I glanced again at her mourning bonnet, and her dress of crape. “He had become more strange of late,” said Amy. “The fancy that you would come and take me from him grew stronger before he died. I knew how strongly the fancy had taken possession of his mind, and that it grew out of his love for me. That was enough.”

“And you came here alone, Amy?”

“Yes, and from a distant place; I knew that you were now the Warden, and I came alone to ask you to forgive me, even though you should have changed towards me.”

Well, well! what need have I to write how I replied to Amy, God bless her!

* * * * *

“Dear love,” said I; “my mother waits for me at tea.” I took her hand and led her down the room, and through into the house. By-and-bye, we all three sat together, with the window open, looking out into the gardens—Amy in the old chair in which she

had often sat at work. It had been a fine day, and the sun went down without a cloud. We lighted no candles, but still sat there talking, when the leaves were stirred by a cool wind, and many stars were out.

Early in the winter of that year our old enemy, the blind man, fell ill and died. Amy was then my dear, dear wife. She knew that he had been the cause of sorrow to us; but she waited on him in his illness, and was, at the last, an Angel by his bed. We sat that night beside the fire. We sat there until late, remembering our old troubles, and grateful to the Providence that had shaped them to a happy end.

BRITAIN.

MY faith is in my native land;

Her maids are pure, her sons are brave;
And Liberty sails from her strand,

That free-born men may free the slave.
Her courage is the fear of God:

From Him she gathers strength complete,

To tread the path that One hath trod,
And One, alone, with naked feet.

She is not what she yet may be;

And, therefore, till her work is done,
I know she marches onward free,

On to the setting of her sun.
Great splendour will the world behold;

The West will shine with wondrous light,
And she, on clouds of crumbling gold,
Will sink to her immortal night.

A welcome hand she reaches out

To modern friend, or ancient foe;
Nor can her grasp give birth to doubt

Of honest faith, or friendship slow.
In forward steps her sons are bold,

But to her system firm and true,
They know the value of the Old,

They feel the virtue of the New.

Household Words. XI.

Her may the Arts for evermore

Ennoble for their nouriture!

Her may the distant sheening shore

Enrich; and may her temples pure

To all men preach the living truth!

But never let her missions roam

Unblest abroad, while age and youth

Are pining to be taught at home.

Her mighty names can never die;

The Fountain-spring baptised their
years:

She is the foremost in the eye

Of Destiny, through them and theirs;

And while her sons remain sincere,

And what they feel speak freely forth,

The moving world may never fear

The icy fetters of the North.

OUR PARISH POOR BOX.

WE live in a curious parish. It is curious for many reasons; but is most curious because three parts of its inhabitants live away from home three parts of their time. Not that we dwell among rich landholders who come down only on rent days; or just to look at the estates which support their extravagance in other places, as they would walk into their picture-gallery to look at a landscape. Neither is our parish afflicted with meteorological and sanitary arrangements of such a character as to banish every person who can afford to stay away. We simply belong to a very industrious parish; and being idle ourselves, have leisure to devote to the praise of other people's industry.

St. Nancy de Lovell is a large parish, and has many defects for which its size furnishes no excuse. While it has large streets and squares, large families and po-

pulations, it has a large number of small, dirty, and crowded streets. These small, dirty, and crowded streets yield a large proportion of unhealthy and ill-cared-for families, which swell the "statistical" population, and lead to angry remarks in newspapers. If the tax-gatherer calls upon one of the "existing" population of St. Nancy de Lovell (one of the hundreds who merely exist), his appeals are vain. "Father is at work," says one child; "Mother's out charing," says another. So far, so good. The "work" of the father, and the "charing" of the mother, may, by-and-bye, meet even the tax-gatherer's demand; but all cannot leave so good a reason for their absence.

One of the most curious parts of our curious parish is Burlington Square. Burlington Square is, architecturally, of the Roman cement order; which invariably gives houses the appearance of having worn out their respectability before they were fairly finished. What was destined for the garden and pleasure-ground for children whose parents could afford the requisite guinea a year, has been turned into the potato, cabbage, and flower-ground, of a small market-gardener and florist. What would have been the "lodge," is now a small hot-house. Half the iron rails have been knocked in or stolen, and the vacuities are patched with pieces of board, old matting, or unhealthy-looking clumps of privet. The fact is, the houses in Burlington Square were an unfortunate speculation. When the "skeletons" of the greater part were run up, the projector found that his purse had run down. When the frost had swollen the mortar, and rendered some of the bricks dangerously independent of each other, the rain sapped the parapets, and a rich green moss slowly gangrened the rafters. Splodgit, the publican at the corner, made an offer for the lot, bought them, stuccoed them, and fitted them up one by one. He tried at first to get respectable tenants to avoid cutting up each house into lodgings; but it was of no use — Burlington Square gradually dwindled away among laundresses, policemen, menders of boots and shoes, owners of mangles, proprietors of donkeys, and dealers in milk. Consequently, Burlington Square, in the district of Albans West, St. Nancy de Lovell, was with good reason designated — according to the rank or taste of the speaker — as a "low neighbourhood," a "rookery," or a "back slum." Yet, many baskets of clean clothes found their way home to more promising dwellings, on Friday and Saturday nights, on the heads or barrows of the forlorn Burlingtonians. Hard-knee'd Burlingtonians scrubbed floors till they were white, and fit to receive the best Kidderminster that ever showed the dust; other Burlingtonians squatted all day like Indian idols in china-shops, and defied the consumptive inroads of

London mud, by their handicraft in nails and leather. There was plenty of industry, and plenty of profligacy. All the children did not play in the street or get run over, and all the children who played in the street were not dirty. Many of the houses kept their street-doors closed, and some of the staircases displayed a fair per-centage of banisters. Scarlet runners, red geraniums, modest fuchsias, and even Brob-dignagian sun-flowers, occasionally indicated an amelioration in the items of humanity forming the St. Nancy Burlingtonia. Poverty had lots of votaries, but Despair could not have claimed them for his own. Take it all for all, the Recording Angel might have found more work in Burlington Square, than the Accusing Spirit.

The church of Albans West, St. Nancy de Lovell, was a new structure, and its new perpetual curate was the Reverend Bird Fowler; a middle-aged gentleman in more senses than one. His whole house and establishment was middle-aged, from the housekeeper down to the hall chairs. His shirt collar was a mediæval hoop, his coat a mediæval cassock, and his only chimney ornaments a few mediæval crosses and fonts. He walked with down-cast eyes, frequently crossed his hands on his breast, and seemed perpetually wrapped in thought. Mischievous people likened him to a stiff and faded monumental brass. The boys were afraid of

him, and the little girls looked up to him with an indefinite kind of wonder. He scarcely ever spoke above a whisper, and then in but few words. He never laughed. If he smiled, he seemed astonished at his own facility, and quite ashamed of himself. He was never seen in company with any human beings but clergymen; he toasted his own bread for breakfast, and was supposed to have a leaning towards the doctrine of celibacy.

The more parochial features of his character were those which more intimately concerned Albans West. Placed suddenly in a district where half the neighbourhood was built and tenanted upon the Burlingtonian model, activity was the first requisite in a new clergyman. Nor was the Reverend Bird Fowler wanting in activity. He quarrelled with the schoolmaster of the Albans district about some hymn-books used by the children on the first visit he paid to the school-house, and got up a singing class for Gregorian chants, and for anthems a thousand times too difficult for any parochial children the next day. He made an attempt to clip the too luxuriant tresses of some of the little girls. Indignant remonstrances from the mothers followed; ending in the removal of one clever little girl, whose rapid improvement was thus cut short with her ringlets. Finally — backed by the influence of some ancient virgins of the district — he invented and introduced a new costume for the girls, which com-

bined the demureness of a nun's habit with the symmetry of a strait jacket.

Inside the church, Mr. Bird Fowler was uncommonly active; the bells were hard at work, at all sorts of times and seasons. The church was open all day for people to drop in, either to pray, or to stare about them and look at the diapered organ-pipes, or to try and steal the books off the lectern and out of the pews; as Mawley Toms did, who was subsequently for that sacrilege transported for the term of his natural life. Furthermore, directly service began, the priests at the altar and the scanty congregation in the open benches, kept moving and turning about and about, until some old people thought the changes in the service would turn their own heads, and accordingly went over to Little Bethel in preference, where they could listen peacefully with much less fatigue.

Of almsgiving, collection-making, and charity sermons, there was abundance. "Affectionate" letters, addressed to bishops who had been setting their archbishops and their clergy at defiance, formed piteous and tearful publications, "the proceeds to be devoted to the foundation of a bishopric among the Esquimaux," and were greedily purchased by forbidden-looking females in mourning, who came from West End streets in cabs and carriages. Querulous pamphlets against that often-abused collection of individuals, the Government, published under

strange allegorical titles, in which simple things were smothered under far-fetched language, dropped from the fluent pen of the Reverend Bird Fowler. The "Church and Bishop Protector" lay continually on the antique oak table in his library, rarely without his name in the leader, in the "notices," or in the correspondence of some virtuously-indignant subscriber. Of visiting among the poor there was not only plenty, but a great deal more than the poor cared for, or could benefit by. The hard-labouring part of the community, who went to work before daylight, could not be questioned as to their absence from seven o'clock matins, and therefore cared little about the visiting societies; and their wives, who were washing all day and who could not read, found talking to a clergyman whom they could not understand, so much work lost. The few who were thus drawn to church, found the service far beyond their comprehension, and either went over to Little Bethel, like others before them, or kept to their Sunday beer and pipes, and read the "Sunday Growler," of which a "permanent enlargement" had just been announced.

Practical people, who looked at both sides of a shilling in all possible lights before they gave or spent it, began to speculate as to the incomings of the District Church of Albans West. Not that they had, or had reason to have, the slightest suspicion that any

part of the floating church revenue found its way into the private purse of the Reverend Bird Fowler. Strictly and sternly honourable in every transaction, seeking to pay beforehand rather than to avoid or postpone payment, even in the smallest matters, he stood, in this respect, without the remotest tinge of reproach. Still the grand complaint — a serious one — was this: — The funds of the school did not now meet the ordinary demands, which had hitherto been adequately provided for, and yet there seemed to be a larger amount of subscriptions than ever. Poor but hard-working families found themselves suddenly deprived of trifling, but to them important, assistance, which their superiors had rendered them; and the plea which their superiors found for rendering it no longer, was, that “they had really so many calls upon their purse.” Yet the visiting went on as vigorously as ever. The houses of the poor could scarcely be called their own. Fidgety questioning, of which church-going formed the staple subject, annoyed the wives, teased the children, and sometimes kept the husbands away from home. At length, young Butts, of the great brewing firm of Butts, Firkin, and Tubbs, who had always been very liberal in their donations, declared that he should stop all subscriptions: adding that there appeared to be more almsgiving than ever in the parish, but less charity. The fact was, the large funds, spent in avowed purposes of

charity, were, like the Irishman’s blankets, “all too long at the top, and too short at the bottom.”

It happened in this wise: — The seven o’clock daily service was the favourite hobby of the new vicar, and with such earnestness and spirit did he ride it, that he attracted to it, by means partly of our poor box, a congregation of sixteen old servants past service, one decrepid butler, and two superannuated widows. Miles Shortpound, a costermonger, whom the Reverend Bird Fowler had detected in the act of invoking a violent mining operation upon the eyes of his donkey, and whose scales and weights had been under the disagreeable surveillance of the Inspector more than once, was one of the most regular attendants at the seven o’clock service. To be sure, his wife complained that the business went to rack and ruin, and that Miles came home drunk nearly every night. Still he was regular in his attendance; the vicar looked upon him as a reforming or reformed character, and a pretty liberal supply of the offertory gifts found their way into Miles’s wash-leather money-bag in consequence. Mrs. Miles grieved at first; then contented herself with sharing the money. Finally, the whole family turned seven o’clock goers; and, finding they could live upon alms, left the coal and potato business to the care of a dirty boy, and a remarkably impertinent, though highly popular, magpie.

A near neighbour of the Short-

pounds was Mrs. M'Fudge, an active old sexagenarian, who worked as hard, and lived as cheerfully, as in her youngest days. By ill luck she fell into the pastoral care of the new vicar. She became the greatest invalid that the dispensary and the vicar's own medical man could physic. She made a virtue of (and made money by) going regularly at seven o'clock, despite the "rheumatics." In short, this worthy old lady cost our poor box seven or eight times as much to support as would have rendered efficient aid, or cheered the declining years, of a dozen such as she had once been. Nor was this all. Scorning to monopolise the advantages of seven o'clock religion to herself, she introduced a daughter, who, unaccountably, became consumptive; although the visiting stethoscope persisted in declaring her lungs to be sound.

This large assortment of voluntary paupers — who preferred receiving alms to working honestly — comprised various editions of character equally disgraceful. The vicar of Albans West, St. Nancy de Lovell, was fast proceeding to empty the shop and the work-room of industrious hands, and to fill the church with the worthy congregation thus obtained. Servants began to talk of leaving their places, unless they were allowed to go out at extraordinary times of the morning; assignations were planned at the same convenient hour; and so ra-

pidly was the work of demoralisation spreading, that the "house of prayer" was fast approaching the state which its Lord and master once impressively denounced. Soup-kitchens, blanket-distributions, coal-tickets, Christmas dinners, instead of being open to all whose toils and whose poverty had deserved them, became the exclusive property of the early idlers, who rose early and revelled in the spoils of the charitable. Meanwhile the vicar himself was spending half his money in plans for the benefit of the poor; yet every thing in the parish was getting worse and worse. Indolence and impertinence reigned supreme amongst half the domestic servants; a charwoman came, or stayed away, as happened to suit her inclination; and a royal reign of dependent independency set in among the Church party. The Dissenters benefited by it; for they lost several of their idlest and most profligate members; who, taking a sudden fit of orthodoxy, were triumphantly converted.

The perpetual curate — with all his rigorous strictness in religious matters, all his severe enforcing of Church discipline — was an unsuspecting character, as far removed from the man of the world as a child newly born. Transplanted abruptly from the quiet, regular conventionalities of a college life — a life varied with few events greater than occasionally calling up an under-graduate for cutting chapel, or auditing the college accounts, the Reverend

Bird Fowler was as little calculated for the duties of a large parochial district, as a recluse fresh gathered from the Eastern deserts. Filled with mediæval rituals, post-Apostolic controversies, and cloister-like ideas of mankind, the incumbent of Albans West found himself, at the end of two years, surrounded by an uproarious and disaffected laity; with a church out of repair, an aggravated amount of real poverty, and a respectable class of parishioners who unwillingly withdrew their support from the charities they found working to such evil results. Many persons, mistaking the abuse for the error, gave up all idea of assisting the poor; and because their former aid had been misapplied, turned a deaf ear to the petitions even of the deserving. Thus did a clergyman, who had spent much of his own means, who had exhausted health and energy in a visionary desire to blend the system of a monastery with the active principles of a working district, sever the rich from the poor, by the very means by which he had sought to unite them, and neutralised the effects of the example he himself had set forth.

Burlington Square is dirtier, poorer, and more debased than ever; and the publican at the corner is building a villa at Holloway, to which he intends to retire. I do not know what he asks for the good-will of the business, but I doubt not it will be something approaching to the price of a well-

timbered estate. Where alms supersede work, and where religion holds out a premium for idleness, public-houses are an excellent investment.

CHIPS.

A GOLDEN NEWSPAPER.

OF all the fevers which afflict humanity, none are so sudden and violent as the gold fever. In the middle of last May a gentleman named Hargreaves discovered indications of gold in the soil around Summer-Hill Creek, near Bathurst, Australia. The moment he made this discovery public, the yellow fever spread over the fifth section of the globe with magical rapidity. Bathurst and its neighbourhood became suddenly populated. People came from every part of Australasia, not in single spies, but in whole battalions, to pick, and dig, and grub for gold. One lucky fellow found a lump weighing down thirty-five sovereigns. Another a piece of quartz, of the weight of eight pounds; six pounds of which were supposed to be pure gold. Every fourth or fifth man managed to get a pinch or two of the yellow snuff between his fingers. The Government geologist started for the spot, took up a bucket-full of earth; and washed out of it twenty-one grains of gold. Allured by this authentication, farmers, stockmen, shepherds, overseers, editors, tradesmen, and even magis-

trates, congregated around Bathurst, with pickaxes, shovels, blankets, pannikins, opossum-rugs, cradles, and the approved appurtenances of the gold-seeker. From all the country round, for hundreds of miles — especially from Sydney, one hundred and twenty miles away — locust-clouds of men swarmed towards, and settled upon, the gold-field.

We have now before us, "The Sydney Morning Herald," dated a few days before the golden news reached that colony. It is a modest sheet, filled as usual with price-lists, advertisements, little vignettes of ships "just about to sail," criticisms on the Colonial Office, and letters from complaining correspondents. We turn over the file, and "The Sydney Morning Herald" of May the 23rd blazes upon us. The change is marvellous. The sheet is doubled, and the contents entitle it to be called a "Golden Number." The eye cannot rest upon any corner without being dazzled with "gold." Everything that is touched upon is turned to gold: even the advertisements; here are some specimens: —

CONVEYANCE TO THE DIGGINGS.—

For Private Sale, two first-rate English-built new Dog Carts, with Aprons, Lamps, &c. Apply, —

GOLD DIGGINGS. — Strong Colonial Rum, to stand one to two, made expressly for the purpose, and will be a saving of one hundred per cent. on the Carriage to the Mines. To be had only at the Stores of the Undersigned. Address, —

Every imaginable article is advertised, as if going to the diggings were the only journey through the world. "Tents for the Gold Regions;" "Boots for the Gold Regions;" "Biscuits for the Gold Regions;" "Bottled Beer for the Gold Regions;" "Razors for the Diggings;" "Trousers for the Mines;" "Hats for the New Dorado;" "Bedsteads for the Placers;" are all announced, as if no single article was designed for the people who remain behind. Auctioneers' puffs tell of the extent of the exode in the plainest terms. One commences with —

UNRESERVED. — Mr. John Smith has received instructions from a gentleman leaving Sydney for the Gold Country, to Sell by Auction, &c.

Another: —

EXTENSIVE CLEARING-OUT SALE. — Mr. D. Cock has received instructions to submit to public competition, this day, Friday, at half-past ten o'clock precisely, without reserve, the property of parties about to proceed to the Ophir Gold Diggings.

A merchant of a quaint turn of humour, and of somewhat deficient grammatical attainments, advertises in this fashion: —

TO PERSONS that *won't* go to the Gold Mines. — For Sale, a large-size English Feather-bed, one hundred pounds weight, for six pounds. — **TO PERSONS** that *will* go to the Mines. — A large-size Tent and Poles, four pounds; one ditto, ditto, two pounds; double-bodied Phaeton and Harness, sixteen pounds.

A Mr. Smith advertises "Shirts for the Diggings, double sewn, and warranted to stand the test of hard water." A Mr. Jones, who heads his *affiche*, "Gold!!! Gold!!!

Gold!!!” addresses his fellow citizens in a tone of irresistible persuasion: —

“Whoever may say nay, is an undeniable fact, that large fields of gold exist in our own country, and almost at our own doors. Who, then, would stay at home? Why not to the Diggings? ‘nothing venture, nothing win.’ But, be advised; the want of the Most Glorious Success to those already on the spot, is known to be entirely attributable to the absence of all proper apparatus for detecting and separating the particles of gold. Then haste to Jones’s Cabinet Manufactory, King Street, where you can purchase for a mere trifle, Rockers for washing the Gold, upon the most approved principle, by one who has had long experience among the Spanish, American, and Mexican Gold Finders,” &c., &c.

The proprietor of an establishment, named “Waterloo House,” informs the public that “Parties purchasing their outfits for the Gold Mines, to the amount of thirty shillings, at Waterloo House, will receive, gratis, the *Digger’s Hand-book, or Gold-Seeker’s Guide*,” &c. Another enterprising dealer apprises his friends, that he “has just received a few of Soyer’s Magic Stoves, and Lilliputian Apparatus, specially adapted for out-door cooking.” The same individual — having not the most implicit trust in the gentleness of human nature, when human nature turns to gold-seeking — adds a bristling catalogue of double-barrel guns, pocket duelling and horse pistols, carbines, muskets, gunpowder, bullets, shot-belts, and powder-flasks.

Opening the sheet — for as yet only the outside pages have been

surveyed — we read, with ever-increasing astonishment, headline after headline, all about the same intensely absorbing subject. The first leading article is entitled, “The Gold Field.” There are “Mems. about Gold;” “The Gold Mania;” “Gold!” a poem; and a long array of letters from the Diggings, written “by our own correspondents.” Then come a number of epistles addressed to the editor, by sundry citizens of Sydney, without exception, about the newly found gold-fields.

One gentleman is cuttingly sarcastic; he declares with bristles sturdily erect: —

“Almost every Botany Bay holder of a bag of sugar, a chest of tea, a ton of flour, a cask of ale, or a gallon of spirits, has now joined in fostering this unsubstantiated clamour. The demon of Insatiate Greed rides the colony, and in a few days will be joined by rampant Robbery and Grim Murder. You walk the streets, and everybody asks you, ‘Are you going to the Diggings?’ At every corner of every street you hear a lie, and at every corner of every street this lie is contradicted; still folly reigns triumphant, and every schemer’s face — and they and their satellites are numerous — shines with a demoniac grin of accomplished trickery. Oh! we hope not. Surely society could hardly be plunged into Hadean horrors at one fell swoop.”

Turned in a day from its dull, commercial routine, to the discussion of a single dazzling theme — changed from a leaden to a golden newspaper — the “Sydney Morning Herald” is a distinct and suggestive sign of the times in Australia.

WISDOM IN WORDS.

THE history, the manners, and even the morals of a nation, are impressed upon its words.

In this country, for example, the history of the relation between the Saxons and the Normans is defined in words distinctly. Prince, duke, marquis, and all titles of rank, excepting earl, (whose wife, however, as a countess, follows the prevailing rule,) are Norman words. But boor, and hind, and churl, are Saxon, for the Normans were the rulers. Also they were invaders, we discover, for they retained the old supreme authority with the old Saxon title, king; and although the "palaces" and "castles" of the land were Norman things with Norman names, the "house," the "home," the "hearth," were Saxon. Nature, in its simplicities, the sun, the earth, the fields, and all the familiar relations of life; father, mother, brother, are expressed in Saxon syllables; and so we find the luxurious Norman superstructure to have been erected upon Saxon ground. All the animals — ox or cow, calf, deer, swine, sheep — preserve old Saxon names. But since the Norman conquerors reduced the Saxon boors to poverty, and made them to be keepers of the herds and fatteners thereof for Norman appetites, we have the animals, while living, Saxon enough; but they become, when they have been killed and cooked, all Norman perquisites, such as beef,

veal, venison, pork, mutton. One meat only, the Saxon claimed — the only one a boor gets even in our own days very often — namely, bacon.

Manners in words may be illustrated out of the familiar syllables, husband and wife. The Hous Band — the Binder of the Household by his labour and by his government of love — will always be the man; the Wife remains at home on household cares intent, "to weave," said our forefathers, for wife and woof are of one origin. Our word "club," which has no analogue in any other European language, speaks a volume about the manners of this country. Seen from another point of view, the word "mob" — an abbreviation of mobile (moveable) — characterises perfectly the manners of the multitude, whether we look at them bodily as they stand in a dense crowd, shifting to and fro; or mentally, as their opinions are stirred and swayed at will by foolish mis-leaders.

For the morality of words, it is a good thing that in England generally, though by no means always, we give to bad things bad names. Robbers in Hungary are called "the poor people," and the phrase of pity shows that they are forced to robbery. A black-leg is called in France, *chevalier d'industrie*, and the phrase shows that in France vice is too lightly regarded. Those whom we in England call "unfortunate," the French call "daughters of joy;" we distinguish loves and likings,

and adapt to a peculiar use the French word *amour*. The French have but one word for love, and feel no desecration in applying it alike to wives and sweethearts. We might point a moral from these things. There is a homely moral, again in our word, when we call the avaricious man a miser, — miserable.

Sometimes the using of a bad word for a bad thing springs out of a defiance of morality. A French word often used in England, *roué*, for a profligate, arose in this way. The Duke of Orleans, Regent of France after the death of Louis XIV., gloried in evil company. He wilfully chose for his companions men whose wickedness had made them worthy of the severest punishment the law inflicted; — breaking on the wheel. Hence he gloried in calling them his *roués*; *roué* being a verb derived from the French word for wheel, and indicating the distinction for which his associates were qualified.

We tread over uncounted wonders when we walk, wherever upon this world's surface we may be. A myriad of marvels are at work within the little compass of our bodies while we live. Beneath the primary expression of our thoughts and wants, the stream of our own history, inner and outer, runs wonderfully blended with the texture of the words we use. Dive into what subject we may, we never touch the bottom. The simplest prattle of a child is but

the light surface of a deep dark sea containing many treasures.

THE PASHA'S NEW BOAT.

MAKING a little excursion, the other day, by railway, I had a sudden fancy to get out at Staines. I was attracted by the quiet look of the village, and its trees and hedges, in their autumnal garb. As I strolled along, what a contrast I felt it to the hurrying crowd of the Strand, which I had left only forty minutes ago! There, all noise, and numbers, and floating smuts, and an eddy of conflicting passengers and vehicles; here, all quietude, and a thinly-scattered population, with green fields round about, and the river Colne softly and regularly gliding on its course.

But the village itself! What a change had it undergone since last I passed through it, on the top of a four-horse coach, spanking along over the bridge, twenty years ago! Over that same bridge there used at that time to pass some six-and-thirty four-horse coaches every day, — fine, well-appointed, gallant turn-outs, to wonder and admire at which all the inhabitants ran to their doors, or thrust their heads and shoulders from the windows, while boys cheered them as they rattled past, and ran by the side with inflated cheeks, until fairly beyond the precincts of the village. Now, these gallant coaches have disappeared in the dark distance, and

in the dusty clouds of science and of change, rather than of years; and a long passenger-train, headed by a roaring locomotive, dashes across the village, every half-hour, over the heads and houses of the "oldest inhabitants."

A bright autumnal sun shines, with coy glances, on the river Colne, which returns a cool and pleasant smile as of yore, while the red and yellow leaves float down its stream, towards the flour-mill, hard by; but the trade of the place is gone. The little traffic that remains is, at all events, of that quiet kind which a casual visitor unavoidably compares with the inexplicable existence of so many of our little towns, with their dusky little obsolete shops, at a hundred miles' distance from the metropolis.

Full of these and similar reflections, partly induced by the quietude of the village, and partly by the fading hues of autumn that surround it, I walk mechanically onwards, towards the flour-mill. It is a water-mill, turned by the Colne. Green meadows are around it. But what a quantity of linen is laid out to bleach upon the meadow nearest the mill! Why, there must be an acre and a half of sheets, and table-cloths, and jack-towels! While thus gazing, the sky becomes overcast, and a dark and threatening cloud comes rolling and unrolling itself this way. See, from one of the lower doors of the mill, a crowd of people rushing forth into the field! They are not millers—they

cannot be laundresses. There are sixty or seventy of them, men and boys. They hurry to the field, and each one seizes something he can carry, such as a jack-towel; but two go to a table-cloth, and three lay hold of the corners of a sheet. What wonderful thing has happened to the bleaching linen? Each piece is not only as stiff as a board, or a barn-door, but appears to be as heavy. The men and boys carry these curiosities into the mill, and then hurry forth for the remainder, so that the field is cleared, and now lies in all its natural greenness, ready to receive the shower.

A terrible shower it seems to be that is about to descend. I have no umbrella, and I make for the mill-door. There, I am met with the repelling announcement, painted up — "No admittance, except on business." I ask to see the foreman, and frankly tell him what my business is — it is to get out of the rain. He smiles, but shakes his head, and points to a little inn not far off. Before departing, I inquire the cause of the extraordinary weight and stiffness of the table-cloths, and sheets, and jack-towels, that have just been carried into the mill. — "They are nothing of the sort, Sir," answers the foreman; "they are pieces of paper." — "Of paper?" — "Yes." — "Not to write letters upon?" — "No, Sir; to make a boat." — "For whom?" — "For the Pasha of Egypt."

Hearing this, I at once found that I *had* some business in the

mill. I explained to the foreman that I was not a rival paper-manufacturer, nor a boat-builder, nor a prying speculator, nor a government officer of any kind, but simply a Household Word; whereupon I was presently admitted. The threatening shower passed over soon after this, and out again sallied the troop, bearing their respective shares of "paper," to lay down upon the grass, as before. They were placed there to dry, in the air and sun.

I found the interior of the mill, with its adjoining house, divided and appropriated in a very ingenious manner. The business of the mill, for grinding corn, was carried on, as it always had been; but its present owner was Mr. Charles Bielefeld, the papier-mâché manufacturer, of Wellington Street, Strand, London; and he had taken a lease of the mill and premises, in order to try the experiments of a new invention, and to carry on a new branch of his business, in pursuance of this invention. To this end, one room in the mill, ground corn; another, ground rags; one, had the machinery of the flour-mill, — another, that of his papier mâché. The bed-rooms of the house adjoining were half-filled with picture-frames, having all the appearance of the richest carvings in oak, maple, mahogany, ebony, and the boldest or most intricate filigree or scroll-work in iron and bronze, — but every morsel of it paper, or rather mashed rags. The lower rooms of the house were nearly all

appropriated to painting-rooms, where several Italian artists, of superior talent and skill, were employed upon great slabs, that had every appearance of polished marble, but were of the same homely composition I have mentioned. Even the kitchens had to contribute their share to the "great work;" and I saw a carpenter's planing elbow advance and retreat in alarming proximity to a leg of mutton roasting.

From the foreman, whom I found very obliging, and from one of the artists engaged in painting a ferocious tiger on a delicate blue enamelled ground, I obtained the following elucidation of the amusing and no less interesting scenes, the outlines of which we have just hastily sketched.

The Pashá of Egypt — having found that richly-painted panels in his pleasure-yacht were continually splitting or warping with the heat, and that fine carvings in wood, and other decorations and works of art in that material, and also in plaster, frequently cracked and fell to pieces from the same action of the climate — suddenly bethought him of papier mâché, not only for the ornamental work, but to form the main substance of the whole interior, fore and aft, of his yacht. Panels, bulk-heads, staircases, partitions, he wanted to have them all of papier mâché. Without inquiring if such a thing had ever been seen before, or if paper had ever yet been wrought to any such consistency — as, indeed, it never had, or anything

approaching to it, in the magnitude required—his Highness sent word to certain opulent and intelligent Greek merchants now in London, making known his orders, and taking it for granted that somebody would be found in England to execute them. The merchants having carefully examined all the works in the above-mentioned material which were sent to the Great Exhibition, were of course very much struck with the colossal column and Corinthian capital manufactured by Mr. Charles Bielefeld, together with other works of his, showing great originality and a perfect command over the material. To him, therefore, they applied, making known the wishes of his Highness the Pasha, and in the event of the thing being found practicable, proposing a contract.

Mr. Bielefeld accordingly made some experiments, and models, both with papier mâché, and for the new machinery that would be required, and soon becoming convinced that he could effect what was required, he signed a contract. Different pieces of workmanship have been shipped off, from time to time, as they were completed; and some of the most artistical of them are now in course of finishing. They undoubtedly involve much more extensive results in future. But to render this clearly intelligible, it is requisite to offer a preliminary word of explanation.

The credit of the original invention of papier mâché is given

by the English to the manufacturers of France; and strangely enough—indeed, it is the only instance I ever heard of such a thing between the rival manufacturers of any two nations—the French most courteously insist upon giving it to the English. Leaving this excess of politeness to settle the question of priority, I shall simply say that the French and the Germans made use of it as early as 1740 in the manufacture of snuff-boxes, and subsequently of trays, and similar articles, and that it gradually rose in importance with the French and Austrian artisans towards the close of the eighteenth century; but that its new, improved, and enlarged application are entirely of recent date, and that in excellence of workmanship, with regard to numerous ornaments and articles of domestic utility, and more especially of architectural decoration, England has surpassed all other nations.

But three or four species of manufacture, each very different from the other, are often confounded and called by the common term of papier mâché. The first of these is simply the old method of pasting one sheet of paper over another, thus forming a millboard of various degrees of thickness, to be used in the manufacture of trays, tea-boards, work-boxes, cabinets, &c., as described in a previous article on the Birmingham "Hot-houses." The next more particularly belongs to the French, and is termed *carton pierre*.

But though called "*carton*," there is in truth very little paper in the composition. It is a mixture of whitening, or slacked lime, pulped rags, and paper, glue or paste, whey of milk, and (they say) white of eggs, though this latter must surely have been too expensive to have formed any considerable portion of the ingredients. This mixture is also assisted by bits of wire in figures, or pieces of string, and fine cord, in order to make the parts adhere, where limbs of figures, or the fine parts of foliage, are likely to be broken off, an event that very easily happens. The *carton pierre* is, in truth, only an improvement, though a very great one, on the old class of stucco and putty ornaments. A third species of manufacture is the regular papier mâché, with its numerous applications. This is made by collecting a mass of refuse paper, fine and coarse, cut in strips, boiled, strained, beaten in a mortar, and worked in a sort of mill with some light glue or other adhesive liquid, until it becomes a thick paste, and is then ready to be pressed into such moulds as are prepared for it. The latest of these inventions is the one patented some years since by Mr. Charles Bielefeld, which differs materially from all the rest. It is called by the generic name of papier mâché, by way, I suppose, of defining the class to which it belongs; yet it is not, in fact, made with paper at all, but simply with the materials from which paper is made; thus ingeniously avoiding

one unnecessary step in the process, as well as the unnecessary duty on paper, — and accomplishing a great saving in time and expense.

Paper is usually made of rags, and the thought suddenly occurred to Mr. Bielefeld to commence his manufacture exactly in the same way, but, stopping short of paper, to convert the rag-pulp at once into the papier-mâché composition. This device, amusingly simple; and, like many of the most ingenious discoveries, an obvious thing after the discovery has been made, constitutes his especial patent, and has enabled him to execute many great works and contracts not otherwise practicable in the same time. The Pantheon, in Oxford Street, the British Museum, the mansion of the late Sir Robert Peel, the Ambassador's palace at Constantinople, with many other edifices of the same class, have been decorated by his manufactures. This affair of the Pasha's New Boat, is, however, a different business, and has called into play a new, and, as I think, an important invention.

I see before me a large slab, some seven feet square, apparently of highly-polished marble, and of about an inch and a half in thickness. It is strong and massive in substance, as it is elegant and delicate in texture. It is about as heavy as the same slab or tablet would be in oak, or mahogany. It is water-proof; it is sound-proof — nothing could be heard

through it any more than through a brick-wall; it will not crack in any heat of climate, nor warp, nor "give" in any way; it can be cut, filed, sawed, planed, turned by a lathe, nailed and screwed; it is a non-conductor of heat and of cold — and it is made of the pulp of old rags. Slabs of this material, in an early stage of the process, were what I at first mistook for sheets and table-cloths, some three hundred pieces of which were lying upon the meadow near the mill, as previously described. These slabs are to form the entire fittings of the interior of the Pasha's steam yacht — bulk-heads, partitions, staircases, panels, lockers, and ceilings.

The paintings and other ornaments lavished upon these slabs are of the highest order of decorative art. Some of them have a soft, cream-coloured, or ivory ground, for the designs, but the majority are of a delicate light-green. The surfaces are, in many cases, divided into oval, round, or oblong panels, on which are painted, in very superior style, numerous bits of Oriental scenery, by way of forming an appropriate back-ground to tigers, leopards, and birds of splendid plumage; among which the English pheasant, king-fisher, and goldfinch, find equal positions of honour. English horses, and fine specimens of our dogs, are also painted with great care and finish. Fruits of various kinds are also in abundance, and flowers and foliage, of course. These are all surrounded and en-

twined with beautiful work of the kind commonly called arabesque, though the Italian artists who are engaged upon them, inform me that in Italy they designate this style of work as "Raffaelesque." It is composed of all sorts of exquisitely graceful foliage, tendrils, and scroll-work, in the most delicate colours, and also in gold. Some of them remind me of paintings on fine porcelain. Nothing of the kind can be more chaste and beautiful; and the general effect of these paintings combines richness with grace, and splendour with delicate taste, in a degree rarely seen. They at once reflect great credit on the taste of the Italian artists and Mr. Bielefeld, and on the Greek merchants who have shown such good judgment in their selection of an English manufacturer.

We should not forget that there is a Pavilion made entirely of these slabs, which is to be placed upon the deck. The paintings of birds, fruit, and flowers, as well as the designs in gold, are of the most elegant description.

But I must return to London. The train soon whirls me back, and I make my way directly to the show-rooms and manufactory of Mr. Bielefeld in Wellington Street, North. I enter, and the first thing that catches my attention — amidst an endless variety of picture-frames, mouldings, cornices, brackets, alto-relievi, bas-reliefs, busts (apparently in plaster, in white marble, and in dark-coloured marble), figures

chimney-ornaments, monumental tablets, looking-glass frames, ceiling ornaments, and articles of furniture — is an immense eagle, swinging from an archway, and seeming to forbid advance into the suite of show-rooms beyond. This eagle is a model or counterpart of a set — I forget how many there were — made for the Pavilion at Brighton; a chandelier hanging by a chain from each of their necks. But I am still more confounded by a dragon, that lies crouching on the ground behind a heap of shafts and capitals, and magnificent centre ornaments for ceilings. This dragon is large enough to swallow St. George and his horse too, and still not seem much swollen by the meal. He is so large, they are obliged to unship his wings in order to find accommodation for him. He is the counterpart of four monsters of the same size, made for the same Pavilion, who held each by a chain from their mouths, large and massive chandeliers. So much for ornaments of the minutest work, and so much for monsters. All made of paper — or rather, according to this new patent, of old rag-pulp.

Here, too, I behold an architectural capital — the same immense piece of art-manufacture that stood upon a correspondingly huge shaft on the ground-floor of the Great Exhibition. It measures twenty-two feet in circumference at the top. This is the counterpart of four of the same size that were sent out by Mr. Bielefeld for

the Bank in Australia. (I rejoice to hear that the colonists there are in so flourishing a state as this seems to indicate.) Now, if this prodigious capital were painted, grained, varnished, and polished to resemble a carving in oak, and set up on its shaft, in a grand hall, nobody could possibly discern the difference; and, if painted now and then, it would last a hundred years, and more. But, if such a capital were really to be carved in oak, it would cost, at least, from a hundred and sixty, to two hundred pounds; whereas this one might be had, perhaps, for thirty. In the same proportion of cost, or probably at much less, may picture frames (of this wonderful old-rag composition) be had, resembling oak, maple, ebony, or even bronze, and in rich open-work patterns, so as to defy detection at a few yards' distance. All these, and all *other* manufactures, in which elegance, or grandeur, or beauty of form, and general fine taste, are brought within the means of the great majority of the educated — aiding as they also do in the education and refinement of the mass of the people — are among the most cheering signs and tokens of progress in our present day.

“The frames of Mr. Bielefeld” (says the “Art-Union,” and I fully coincide in the opinion of the writer) “present the best characteristics of fine carving: the course of the chisel, though subdued, is everywhere apparent, and the liberal resort to under-

cutting, and occasionally nearly alto-relief, realise the peculiar finesse and spirit of the best manipulators amongst the old carvers in wood; substituting for the dull, prim, and mechanical mediocrity of works in putty composition, an easy, liberal, and artistic dexterity in the execution, which must be appreciated by every lover of the excellent. They may be recommended also, on other grounds; when conveyed from place to place, (to Provincial Exhibitions, for example,) they are liable to no injury from chipping, as the common frames are; we have seen the effect of a picture entirely ruined, in consequence of the frame being shattered during transit. An essential advantage also is, that these frames weigh no more than half the weight of the usual frames of the same size. We strongly urge upon artists to visit this establishment, and examine for themselves."

The premises in Wellington Street for these manufactures, are laid out in different departments. In the basement there is a steam-engine with all its appurtenances. It is applied to drive lathes, and machinery of various kinds; and the steam is applied to warming every room and work-place. The ground-floor is laid out in show-rooms, the contents of which I have already indicated, though slightly enough. Next above the show-rooms, is an entre-sol, and here the presses are at work, forcing the papier mâché into different moulds, where it is left

to dry, before taken out to harden, and to be put through the ornamenting and finishing processes. Among these presses there is an hydraulic press, which exerts an enormous power, equal to a weight of eighty tons. Over these rooms are the graining and gilding-rooms; and over these, again, are rooms where other moulding and ornamenting operations are carried on. At the top of all, are the carpenters' work-shops. One side of the house is separated from all the rest; and here, in the rooms on each floor, from top to bottom of this lofty house, are kept the various articles forming the "stock," all ready to meet any extensive home or foreign orders.

I have not sufficient space to speak of the modelling-rooms and casting-rooms, to me, the most interesting in point of art; but the works are not only carried on with the best skill and promptitude, but are of singular variety. This latter quality may be estimated when I mention that, among other "old friends," the mask of Polyphemus, when "Acis and Galatea" was produced so exquisitely by Mr. Macready, was modelled in this department; the anxious manager coming frequently himself to inspect and give instructions during the progress of the one-eyed countenance.

The old comparison of a house built "like a pack of cards," intended to express a sense of utter flimsiness and insecurity, bids fair in these days to have its jest turned into earnest. I understand that

when the Pasha's Boat is completed, Mr. Bielefeld intends to turn his invention of these great slabs (which by new machinery he can manufacture of the size of an ordinary cottage wall, all in one piece) into house-building. By these means a complete house may be sent out to Australia, or elsewhere, all in flat pieces, occupying a comparatively trifling space in stowage; and on its arrival at its destination, the whole can be screwed together in a few hours.

SONNET.

TO ROBERT BROWNING;

SUGGESTED BY A SUNSET OF UNUSUAL BEAUTY.

A MIGHTY sorrow gathers, while the eye

Is by the sun's departing glories fed,
 For they recall the fate of poets dead,
 Who with the noblest of past ages vie,
 And, lately veil'd by earth's horizon,
 shed

Sad beauty from beneath it; yet a power
 Like the pale moon that to their lustrous
 hour

Gave modest tribute as a young ally,
 More felt than known, consoling light
 should shower

From crystal urn that holds the precious
 dower

Of Browning's genius — which, when
 breezes rend

Fond clouds, its lavish splendours glorify
 With lingering love, its azure course
 shall wend

To high dominion in our purest sky.

FRENCH HORSE-RACING.

THE sky is very blue and very bright; the air is crisp, clear, and invigorating. Objects, both dis-

tant and near, seem more clearly defined, more sharp and full of corners, than usual. It is very cold in the shade, and very warm in the sun. You feel a chilling blast upon one cheek — that is the wind; and, upon the other, something red-hot — the sun. The wind is in an eccentric and changeable mood, and seems bent upon putting the weather-cocks out of temper. Everybody who has not brought out an over-coat, wishes that he had; and everybody who has, wishes that he had not. Some people go closely buttoned up; others carry their cravats in their pockets; and nobody is certain which is best — so frequent and so sudden are the alternations from heat to cold. Wherever there are trees, heaps of fallen leaves — ankle-deep, knee-deep — are drifting before the breeze; occasionally furnishing food for "bonfires," and filling the air with clear blue smoke, and that peculiar warm fragrance so suggestive of health and rusticity.

In short, it is October — and October in Paris; Paris, that is bidding adieu to *al-fresco fêtes*, and beginning to find the inside of *cafés* preferable to the outside. It is still, however, a city of sunshine, and there is at any rate no prospect of rain to spoil its out-of-door diversions. Such was the comforting conviction at which I arrived the other morning, when I prepared, with true English ardour, to "go to the races" — the last of the season.

I had a vague notion that "going

to the races" in France, was not a very dissimilar proceeding from taking a trip to "the Derby" in England. I had prepared myself for rising at some unearthly hour in the morning; for breakfasting in a state of trance caused by the fear of being too late, in the midst of anxieties relative to the packing of hampers, and fears that the livery-stable keeper might have mistaken his instructions, and be very punctual in bringing round the phaeton and four in time for — the Oaks; for ultimately setting forth, amidst the applause of small boys, provisioned for the day, and with perhaps the additional luxury of a pea-shooter and a post-horn — to which, had I belonged to a "crack-regiment," I might have added flour-bags and rotten eggs.

But, alas! going to the races in Paris is a very prosaic proceeding. I grieve to say that my friends called for me at my hotel, on foot, after keeping me waiting about seven hours. Not even a stage-coach was practicable. There are, to be sure, Hansom cabs in Paris (they are among the most recent signs of civilisation), but we agreed that to ride in a Hansom in a foreign land would be something like profanity — almost as bad as drinking bitter ale, another grand and solemn pleasure to be reserved for London alone! Accordingly, we set forth as ingloriously as can be conceived, by way of the old broken-backed *Pont Neuf* (which daily becomes more picturesque and less secure) in the

direction of the "*Cham' d' Mars*;" in pronouncing which latter word, I must insist upon the English reader *not* dropping the final *s*.

On the road to Epsom — at Sutton — there is a celebrated hostelry, called "The Cock," where everybody stops, as a matter of course. On our road to the *Champ de Mars* there is also a place of refreshment, which no wayfarer, *viâ* the *Pont Neuf*, was ever known to avoid. This is the famous establishment of the "*Mère Moreau*," whose name is almost as well known in Paris as the President's is. But what would the plump head-waiter at The Cock say to the French substitute, with its Arabesque front all blue and gold, its plate-glass, its pictorial walls, the lovely and accomplished ladies behind the counter (every one, for aught any of Mrs. Moreau's customers may know to the contrary, a duchess in her own right); and, above all, the effeminate description of refreshments provided for the travellers? One can fancy the disdain with which that prejudiced and respectable person would regard the offer of a plum or a peach, floating in a little glass of perfumed and impotent liquid, that, in its normal state of barbarism, is believed to have been brandy; or his disgust at the discovery that a similar species of refreshment is known by the fanciful and mysterious title of a "*Chinoise*." Nevertheless, victims to the same fatal fascination (which reminds us forcibly of our childhood, and its

dangerous excesses on hard-bake), all classes may be seen at all times mingled in harmony at the "*Mère Moreau's*;" the grandest of yellow gloves side by side with the humblest and most gloveless of *ouvriers*, forming, indeed, as motley a group as can be seen at any "Crystal Palace" (of gin) in London — with the difference, that nobody here is drunk.

Before leaving the "*Mère Moreau's*," into which, it may be taken for granted, we had entered, it is as well to mention that a grand civil war has been waging for the last six months between that establishment and a rival establishment next door. The latter has the attraction of being lined on all sides, from floor to ceiling, with looking-glass; but it has no duchesses; that is to say, the young lady attendants must be classed simply as "respectable females." By this happy arrangement — ladies in one place, looking-glass in the other — the tastes of most persons may be gratified. The shepherd Paris of to-day may bask in the contemplation of beauty at the "*Mère Moreau's*;" while, next door, the modern Narcissus has no need of a brook to reflect his own charming image.

But meantime we are keeping the company waiting for us at the Champ de Mars, or what is worse, perhaps, we are *not* keeping them waiting.

Here we are, then, at last, on the course; and a very respectable course it is; at least a mile and a quarter round — so we are in-

formed — and embracing the entire circumference of the large plain, which is dedicated, like most things in France, to the god of war. Planted closely against the ropes which bound the outside of the circle, with that evident determination to have their money's worth, which is always manifested by "the people" at a gratuitous entertainment — are a miscellaneous collection of men and boys, women and children — bloused, bearded, paletôté, decorated, as the case may be, — waiting, with the same patience that they manifested three hours ago, for the commencement of the race. In the middle of the field are the exclusives: squadrons of gentlemen on horseback, who are evidently thinking of anything rather than their bets — if they have made any — and are looking, like men of taste, at the ladies, who stand up in open phaetons in the approved style. These gentlemen are, for the most part, remarkable for their tight brown baize trousers, hostlers' coats, square-toed boots, and square patches of whisker, with the other accessories which (as all Frenchmen know) make up the ordinary costume of an English nobleman. Some, indeed, have gone so far as to shave their upper lips, and encase their necks in bird's-eye cravats; but these are the enthusiasts. I believe that few of them bet much, or heavily; but their appearance gives them a tremendous character for experience and daring in all matters relating to the turf, —

a reputation which they certainly purchase at a cheaper rate than two or three "knowing" young gentlemen whom I have met with in England.

With the exception of these "noble sportsmen," there is little enough in the scene that the disconsolate Englishman is accustomed to associate with races in his native land. At first sight he would imagine that he had mistaken the day, and had come to witness a review. Posted at regular intervals, all along the ropes on either side of the course, are sentinels, with loaded muskets and stern faces, evidently "on service." In the centre of the ring is a group of mounted officers, who have the appearance of a staff, and who clearly believe themselves to be in possession of the field, and allow the civilians to be there as a matter of favour. The adjacent barracks, too, where immense moustaches hang out of the windows, seem to favour the idea.

At the imminent risk of our lives, we cross the course, attended by a sentry, whose words are a little sharper than his bayonet. Him, however, we defy, with valour; he is too well armed for the duty which he has to fulfil; and we should stand in much greater awe of the policeman in England, who *might* possibly use his staff. Here, among the "outsiders," there is much more variety and animation. Here there are, of course, more soldiers — performing prodigies of prospective

valour in quelling contingent outbreaks — heroic cavaliers in the cause of order, which has not yet been violated. A picturesque group they are; some lounging in their saddles, or leaning against their horses' sides, whistling and singing, cracking rude jokes, and smoking short pipes. As an Englishman gazes on their bronze faces and martial bearing, it occurs to him that if the French army had been made up of such fellows as these, a celebrated person, now lying tranquilly in the Invalides, might possibly have made his way to Brussels on a certain occasion!

Leaving that important question still unsettled, we pass on to the "Grand Stand" — a hastily-constructed wooden edifice, where a very respectable selection of the nobility and gentry, *grisettes* and *gamins*, of Paris, are accommodated with seats at a cost of something less than a ruinous amount in sous. In this vicinity may be seen such important persons as the "promoters of the breed of horses," from whom the umpires are selected — like the Pope from the Cardinals. Here, too, are booths for refreshment, of which it does not seem fashionable to partake; they are apparently placed there to give an air of conviviality to the proceedings. Round the Grand Stand the crowd is, as usual, thickest; but there is no noise, no confusion, and above all, no "thimble-rigging," or "rigging" of any other description; the crowd is patient and

well-bred, like the audience at a theatre. — Stay, there is an exception out yonder, where there seems to be a struggle of some kind, and from whence “strange oaths” are borne upon the breeze. I ask an *ancien militaire* with a decoration in his button-hole, who has stopped me to take a light for his cigar, what is the matter? “Nothing at all,” is the answer — simply “*deux messieurs qui se battent*.” The “*deux messieurs*” are presently led past me, and a pair of more horrible ruffians I think I never beheld — but the politeness of the old school has nothing to do with mere facts. Alas, that these fine courtesies should be passing away from us!

Another diversion in the crowd. They are evidently getting tired of waiting. This time the gentlemen of France are *not* tearing each other's eyes out, nor kicking each other in the face — proceedings inseparable from the pleasant French system of boxing. A professor of a great science is delivering a lecture, which he illustrates by experiments. He has placed his foot upon a little wooden bench, which he carries about with him for the purpose, and the first impression of the innocent spectator is that he is about to tie his shoe. Nothing of the kind. Observe, he takes from his pocket a neckerchief, with which he solemnly invests his leg, just above the knee, with as much care as ever dandy bestowed upon his throat. His object is to teach the public that noble art — the want

of which has driven so many men into Coventry or despair, and the possession of which made the fortune of the late Mr. Brummel — the art of tying a cravat! See with what interest he is watched. Aspiring youth sees the gratification of its ambition — unsuccessful middle age feels that there is yet hope — as the Professor, with a volubility of tongue and dexterity of finger equally difficult to follow, demonstrates every variety of knot, bow, or tie, from the highly-respectable, uncompromising rigidity that says capitalist in every wrinkle, down to — or shall we say *up* to? — the most graceful negligence that ever embittered the working hours of an exquisite. I notice, by the way, that the Professor, though impressing upon others the importance of his art, has arranged his own neck most inartistically — a seeming contradiction; but then bishops do not always practise what they preach, any more than doctors are remarkable for taking their own prescriptions. The lecture was immensely successful, and the lecturer made his bow amidst a shower of copper. As my young friend Glum said the other day, when an English manager refused his tragedy, “France is, after all, the foster-mother of Genius!”

But surely it is time for the races to commence? Time? Yes; it is two hours after the hour appointed. The jockeys are, doubtless, being weighed — and found wanting, perhaps, in many quali-

fications, as French jockeys usually are. A loud roar — and shouts of laughter chorused all over the field. Here they come, that's certain — but with a strange sort of welcome! No; it is only a dog running over the course; a dog of sporting appearance, who makes his way at once into the ring. At last the great opportunity has arrived for the military to assert itself. The army is not to be trifled with. A score of dragoons at once make an impetuous charge against the invader, whom they chase all over the field. But never since Abd-el-Kader defied the French legions in Algeria, have Frenchmen found so formidable a foe. An enemy making a steady resistance may be easily overcome by numbers; but an enemy who will not fight, nor altogether fly, is terrible. Now, he seems inclined to run for it; they will have him for certain! Twenty hoarse voices are raised in concert — twenty sabres gleam in the sunshine — twenty steeds rebound from the pressure of forty spurs, and thunder forward with resistless fury. Nothing can withstand the charge — except the enemy, who is on a sudden seen very quietly twenty yards *behind* his pursuers. The troop now wheel round in admirable style, and attempt to cut the animal down with their sabres. Somehow, he is always under the horses' legs; and a horse, it is well known, is not the more manageable under such circumstances. The crowd laugh louder and louder, and the dra-

goons become more and more furious. Chasing one's own hat in a high wind is generally considered the most hopeless and bewildering object of human aspiration; but a troop of horse chasing a dog beats it hollow. The dragoons come to a stand, and seem to consult; a delay of two or three minutes takes place before they decide upon renewing the attack; meanwhile the dog has walked very leisurely off the field, to the great relief of everybody.

Now the real business of the day is beginning in earnest. The horses are coming on to the course. They come, led caressingly by the jockeys, who talk together in groups. But I am disappointed in their appearance. They are barbarous specimens, perhaps, of the jockeyship of that very young sportsman, France? No, they are most business-like — most orthodox — quite English, in short. Their jackets — pink, blue, yellow, white, party-coloured — are perfection; their boots have not a wrinkle that is not unexceptionable. As for the horses, they are slim and sleek, and tread the ground in the evident belief that they are at Newmarket or Ascot — where, in truth, they would not be very much out of place. I refer to my "*Entre-acte*" — the little theatrical journal containing the substitute for "Dorling's c'rect list," — which is being sold everywhere on the course, and I discover that the simple reason why the horses and jockeys remind me of England, is — that

they ARE English! Flatman! Boldrick!! Chiffney!!! and a host of celebrities, whose names I have learned by heart from "Bell's Life," are before me. Now it is all over, I don't mind confessing that I *had* expected so see something like the French postilion, who rides six horses round the circle at Astley's. I had made up my mind to moustaches; and half believed that they would ride standing, and not sitting, on the saddles. As it is, the Frenchman, of whom there are evidently some — for I see certain Antoinettes and Pierres down in the list — are distinguishable from their British brethren by little else than their colours.

And the horses? Are they English also? At this inquiry, a little English "gent" turns round, and with a good-natured smile of contempt, informs me that "most of 'em belong to Rasper and Pastern." — Rasper and Pastern — evidently a notorious firm — and I had never heard of them before! The same authority further informs me that they (the horses) are none of 'em first-raters (which I believe I could have told him myself); — that it is not worth while to bring out really fine animals, on the chance of a prize of a very few thousand francs — but that these are well enough "as times go."

While we are talking, the jockeys are mounting, and arranging themselves for the start. There is some sort of signal given — for which, I observe, nobody

seems waiting or watching, as in England: I, myself, am ignorant whether a handkerchief is dropped, or a gun fired, or a bell rung, or whether neither, or all, of the three operations are performed. With as little formality as may be, some ten or a dozen horses make what in sporting eyes would be considered as bad a start as could possibly be accomplished. A few Englishmen, with sharp anxious faces and obvious betting-books, declare it to be "too bad," and "disgraceful;" but everybody else thinks it the right thing, or all the better for being the wrong thing.

After the preliminary stumbling and shying, however, they go gallantly; but, from what I see of the relative merits of the competitors, I should think that the contest might just as well have been between a couple of the horses simply; for no more than that number seem to have the ghost of a chance. However, not a man gives in; the "nowheres" are as hopeful as the "everywheres," to the very last. Now they make a great strain and turn the corner; the ladies in carriages all turn also; and the sporting gentlemen on horseback — as sporting gentlemen always do, and I suppose always will do — take the diameter of the field, and dash across to meet them coming round. Now they near the winning-post. Some feeble-minded persons declare themselves for Blue, but there can be no doubt that White will be the winner. White wins accordingly

— not by a nose, nor a head, nor a neck, nor a length, but by numberless noses, uncountable heads, incalculable necks, and no end of lengths — perhaps, some dozen or two. In White's energetic exuberance, he flies so far beyond the flag that you think he is going round the field again. But this is only a jovial mode of asserting his triumph, which he has probably learned in France. By this time the crowd has become more dense. New arrivals clamour for the second race, and, in due time, for the third: which are all won and lost with the greatest good-humour. The races themselves do not differ materially from similar displays in England. The grand difference is in the interest which they create. In England nearly all the spectators are excited by the *contest*: in France, the majority, who have no notion of betting, are simply amused by the *spectacle*. They go to a race, as they would go to the Hippodrome; and they wonder, perhaps, why M. Auriol, the admirable clown, is not engaged at both places.

It is all over: the people have been entertained — and that is sufficient. They do not trouble themselves about who has lost and who has won. They have nothing to say about "making up a book," "odds," "backing," "hedging," or "levanting." For them "settling day" has no terrors. They are thinking of dinner, unless attracted by a balloon ascent in the neighbourhood — an irresistible attraction to a Parisian, and one

that can at any time make him forget everything else under the sun.

NEED RAILWAY TRAVELLERS BE SMASHED?

POSSIBLY, N. or M., you never have invented anything; possibly you are the fortunate, or it may be unfortunate, originator of some bright mechanical idea. We will adopt the latter possibility, and, for the sake of some precision, we will state the exact nature of the idea which it has been your good or evil fortune to work out.

You have invented a small apparatus, which you design to fix by the side of a locomotive; and this apparatus, which is very simple, you adapt to a system of railway signals: so contrived, that before every station, junction, or siding, if "caution" be required, your apparatus blows a loud alarm on a whistle; and, if "danger" be signalled, it shuts off the steam, reverses the engine, and puts on the break. All this it does in perfect independence of the engine-driver, if it should happen that this functionary has not seen the signal.

Your machine not only does this; but, whereas a self-acting apparatus might lead engine-drivers to relax in vigilance, and it is always the driver's duty when the signal can be seen to obey its warning before machinery can take the acts of obedience out of his hands, your machine is made

to be a tell-tale, and records inexorably all the duty it has done. This, N. or M., is your invention; don't deny it; if it be not yours, it will belong to some one else, and for our present purpose, that is altogether the same thing.

You have made a hobby of this your invention; you have improved upon and matured it, increasing at the same time its power and its simplicity. You have contrived so that if a truck be moved from a siding to a main line, the danger signal is inevitably set, that a railway train cannot pass without setting the danger signal as it passes, leaving the guard only responsible for the time which he shall suffer to elapse before he indicates "All Right" to its successor. You have your apparatus so contrived, that any breakage of the signal wire can only cause the telegraph to blazon "danger." Your whole contrivance for the locomotive and the stations is so simple, that only breakage of material can put it out of order; you have no wheels, or delicate and complex work; you effect all by the action on each other of a few levers, and by a small double-inclined plane upon the line of road. Every man who examines its construction pronounces immediately that the device is effective, and up to this date you have put it to the test of experiment more than a thousand times, and it has not failed in a single instance. You think you have invented, therefore, an apparatus which will completely strike out of existence the

most dangerous and frequent class of railway accidents, rendering those points along a line which now are the most dangerous — sidings, stations, and junctions — the points at which an accident will be least likely to occur.

Having invented this apparatus, which you believe to be "a great boon to the public," you wish to get it patronised by Railway Companies. Its expense to them will not be great — about twenty to twenty-five pounds per engine — an outlay less than the average amount lost by the preventible crashing and smashing of the railway property. For the sake of the public, you desire this thing of yours to be adopted on the railway lines; and not a little for your sake too. You never were rich, and now you are much poorer than you might have been, had you not been afflicted with this hobby. Your invention has swallowed up your time for the last five years, and has swallowed up your money. You have taken patents out, and Deputy Chaff Wax and Company have taken what your butcher and your baker want. The founder who makes your little machines has had money which you have been wanting sadly for your tailor. You are an obscure man; you have no powerful friend to take you by your hand, and introduce you to the public. You are also somewhat of a disappointed man. You walk about with your unrecognised idea, which eats your bread and cheese, instead of putting meat

and wine into your cupboard — you walk about, indignant at the cold behaviour of society. You have read up, and can cite at will, the histories of all the great inventors who have died in poverty, and have left their devices, and designs, and knowledge, which they could not take into the grave, to be a source of property to others, who come after them. You are fast losing your pristine faith in the power of human energy; having yourself been energetic for five years in vain; and you begin to doubt the genial goodness that you once believed to form an element in human nature; for has not society been deaf as an adder for five years to the valuable offer you have made? Your voice, no doubt, has been extremely faint beneath the common din of life, because you live in an obscure corner of the world, and can make no sound above a whisper. But you call it hard, and think there ought to be a society of men established, in this country — at any rate, for the express purpose of seeking out obscure men who possess ideas, and of listening about for valuable whispers.

You hope we are not jesting at a fact which you consider very serious. You should like us to know something of your struggles and rebuffs as an inventor. Small as your voice is, you knew the need of energy in this life, and have used it to the utmost.

You wrote to the Prime Minister, who answered that he knew nothing of engineering, and could

not give an opinion on your scheme; but bade you understand that, good or bad, it never could receive assistance from the Government.

You visited a nobleman from whose well-known benevolence you cherished hopes of aid. He told you that, with the best wishes to assist all men, he had not the power; and that in his own path of life he had five times as many calls for aid as he could duly answer: that he must confine his support, therefore, to those schemes which he was most qualified to understand.

You called upon the noble Earl of Dusthole, who was said to be not over-wise, but to have a decided genius for mechanics. You obtained an introduction; he was overjoyed to see you; you laid out your drawings, and began your explanation. At your thirty-seventh word the noble Earl fell back in his chair. You never saw a man who tumbled into sleep so suddenly. You ceased your explanation, and you dared not shake your noble patron; what should you do? You poked your finger at his parrot, and excited that bird. But the noble Earl snored on. You groped, since it was dusk now, to the kitchen, summoning candles; for the bell was broken. The arrival of the light aroused your noble friend, who resumed his attentive attitude with,

“You were saying” —?

You went on. He asked for more ocular information. You

had only a little pamphlet, which you called your little book. "Books!" said the noble Earl, "I'm overdone with books. You've no conception how much I'm obliged to read!" You pulled your pamphlet out. "Ah, well!" said your patron, "it's a little one, isn't it? Well, now, I really think I'll read." He drew a candle to him, and read your own pamphlet to you, intermixed with ejaculations of applause. When he had done, he said, "Good — very good; your plan is excellent. Let me see, you mentioned something about a lever. By-the-by, what is a lever? Isn't it a thing that lifts?" You left the mechanical Earl, and you placed no more hope in noble patronage.

As for the engineers, you, a mere amateur, a hobby-rider from the outer world — what welcome should you get on their domain? But you laboured hard to find a railway engineer who would consent to recommend your device for trial on his line.

Obtaining an introduction, you left your drawings with the celebrated Mr. Deaf, requesting leave to call for his opinion and his aid, if he thought fit to give it, in a few days. You called in a few days upon that famous engineer, who, upon seeing you, said, "O yes, you come about your drawings? I have looked at them — a plan for effecting communication between guard and driver —" You begged his pardon, and explained how your scheme was designed, in case of fogs or inattention, for

the mechanical prevention of collisions. "Collisions!" cried the railway engineer. "Sir, there never are collisions. It is all a phantom of the public's. I don't mean to boast in telling you how many miles of line are under my care; now, Sir, there never has been a collision on any of my lines." So Mr. Deaf, who had no ear for newspaper reports, and ignored inquests, bowed you out.

You were introduced, in the next place, to Mr. Dumb, a twin celebrity — a very high authority — who, with constrained politeness, heard your case and examined your plans. "Well, Sir," he told you very frankly, "your apparatus is effective. It would prevent collisions." — You triumphed and expressed your joy at that, hinting that Mr. Deaf had thrown cold water on you. "Well, what did Deaf say?" — "O! he said there never were collisions." — "He is quite right; I quite agree with Mr. Deaf. Besides, if your invention were wanted, it's not good. Look! there is a rod uncovered which would not work in a snow-storm." You explained that this rod was uncovered only in the working plan, and not in the reality. Finally, Mr. Dumb promised that you might have your invention tried on his line, if you brought an engineer's certificate of its success elsewhere. You went away in hope; but when you next called upon Mr. Dumb for the redemption of his promise, alas for you! he had retired from railway business.

You called upon a railway potentate, who told you that his lines were all level, all straight, and all innocent of accidents, and gave you to understand that you were a mischievous person, with your cry about collision; a sort of scarecrow to frighten travellers from railways.

In short, you called upon all manner of engineers; wrote to all manner of directors. You found engineers in general opposed to you as a quack, and combining, as wild herds often combine, to keep out an unrecognised animal; you felt that this was a habit not peculiar to engineers. You found also that engineers shrunk visibly from all patronage that implied recommendation to the directors of additional expense. You found the reputation of a railway engineer with his board, to depend very much on his economy of management, and that to recommend additional expense of only twenty or thirty pounds upon each locomotive, would be to put a black cross against his own name in the board-room. Thus, when you once really got leave to put your apparatus to a test upon one line, you heard that the engineer was pre-determined, in any event, not to recommend you, and you abstained from using, therefore, his permission to experiment. One engineer responded to your urgent putting forth of human life as an off-set to expense: "Life! now, you talk continually about life. Go to an Assurance office, and they will tell you

what a few lives are worth. Not much."

You find that, on one or two lines, the principle of economy is so distinctly made paramount, that the line is farmed to its manager, whose salary depends upon his keeping down the cost of stock below a certain maximum. Such managers immediately say to you, "Granted, your plan is good; if I adopt it, it will cause immediate diminution in my income."

So you find that with all these difficulties to encounter, at the end of five years' battling your position with the railway public is pretty much where it was when you began. Strong influences oppose a rock against you, in addition to the general idea on the part of directors and others, that to make experiments upon the preventibility of collisions would be to persuade the public that collisions do occur, — an asserted fact which they pronounce to be a myth.

Meanwhile, you have embarked everything in your invention; you know it is a true one, and you know that you deserve success. What will you do? We should say, certainly, that when you found your affairs in this position, you should come forward and appeal to us, and those about us who are travellers. If engineers and directors know nothing about collisions upon railways, travellers do; and you may be very well assured that, if travellers come to perceive that there is an invention lying stifled which bids fair to be

a real protection to their lives, they, the said travellers, form a sufficiently important part of the public to compel railway managers to give fair-play and an honest trial to an experiment for which you make out a sufficient *primâ facie* case.

Perhaps, M. or N., the above account of your proceedings is entirely fabulous, a cunningly devised narrative hatched up for the occasion, because we are about — as representing a portion of the travelling public — to express our unscientific opinion of an invention intended to prevent accidents by railway, very similar to that which we have imagined as the product of your ingenuity. You may give, then, to the preceding narrative whatever character you please; the narrative which follows, you will have the kindness to accept as true, upon our testimony.

On a sunny day during the present autumn, that is to say, on the farewell day of our old friend October, who walked out of the year 1851 with a good-humoured smile upon his face, there were mysterious doings upon the line of railway running between the Eastern Counties Station and North Woolwich. Rustics who happened, shortly after mid-day, to be wandering beside that line where it passes over a spot called the Coke Ovens, not far from the Barking road, were strangely puzzled by the spectacle of what might be a wild steam-engine, tearing up and down the line, and

shrieking frequently. This wild horse of the railways appeared to be the victim of a party of gentlemen scattered over the line, who were intently occupied about the taming of the animal. Running to some distance, it would presently return, and at a certain point would set up a wild shriek when it felt the tamer's check, and running on a little way, still more and more slowly, it would very soon come to a stop. Then many gentlemen would mount the creature's back, and back it went, and the same thing was repeated — at the same place the same shriek, and once again the stoppage. All this wild work resulted from the fact that certain gentlemen had been attracted to the spot to witness a few experiments with a contrivance for the mechanical prevention of some of the chief causes of railway accident.

This contrivance is the patented invention of a Mr. C. F. Whitworth. It had been tested for months, fifteen or twenty times a day, upon a small private line of rail belonging to the Butterley Company, the manufacturers of the apparatus, and on this little line at Codnor Park, it had not failed in one out of more than a thousand trials — it had not failed once.

What is the apparatus? Come and see. Our locomotive has not yet arrived: we have been dropped upon the line by the last ordinary train, and here we are at the Coke Ovens, wandering about upon the rails.

Here is a siding to be guarded. Elsewhere there might be a junction, or a station, or a tunnel; here it is a siding. It is only at these weak points, of course, that it is proposed to shield the railway with defensive armour. That these are really the weak points, can be made manifest by reference to the Railway Commissioners' Report for 1850. During that year there were in England thirty-three serious collisions, and of these —

23	occurred at stations.
4	junctions.
2	level crossings.
1	in a tunnel.
3	(at distant places unprotected by signal post or guard.
33	

Very well. The point protected here at "Coke Ovens" happens to be a siding, and we now stand, if you please, at the protected point. Three hundred yards distant from it, or it may be five hundred yards, there is erected the signal post, on one side of the line. The telegraph is worked by a lever at this point where the rails join, and the lever is so contrived that, when set at "All right," it acts as a lock which keeps the two sets of rails apart from one another. To unite the rails for the purpose of moving a truck or anything else, out of the siding here to the main line, it is necessary so to move the lever as to set the telegraph to "Danger;" leaving the after signal of "All Right," an act of discretion in the guard, but not leaving it possible for him to omit the immediate sign of peril. Furthermore, the levers and weights

connected with the telegraph are so arranged, that "All Right" is a constrained position, to which the lever at the siding has to be pulled and set, and that if any accident should occur to the wires, the telegraph would relapse at once to "Danger." So that, while such an accident might for a few minutes delay a train, by causing the driver to shut off his steam, it could not possibly imperil life. The whole signal apparatus is so thoroughly simple, however, that it is no more likely to get out of order, than a kettle-bottom is likely to wear into a cullender; there is nothing to look at but the wear and tear of the material.

Now we will walk towards the signal post. Near it, we see fixed beside the rail a little spring. Upon this spring every train, without exception, presses as it goes by, and the pressure instantly sets on the telegraph the "danger" signal. Thus, a train takes out of fallible hands the warning to expresses and others not to run in upon it, and the "danger" signal so set, remains fixed for so many minutes as it is thought fit and safe should be the smallest intervening time between the passage of two trains over one spot. The signal man restores "All Right," when it is proper that he should do so.

Now we have passed the signal post, and are continuing our walk along the line towards the locomotive, which is just in sight, steaming to meet us. About one hundred yards beyond the tele-

graph, our attention is called to a couple of double wedges, or double inclined planes, placed side by side, which play up and down out of a little hollow close beside the protected line of rail. These little wedges, when the telegraph is fixed at "All Right," are, by the same act, both depressed; they duck their heads together. But at the sign of "caution," one of them bobs up; and they both bob up at the sign of "danger."

There is the locomotive stopping for us; we will go and look, in the next place, at that. To one side of it, is attached a little apparatus in a box, not unlike a folded carriage-step, and scarcely larger. Two little triggers hang down from it to within a little distance from the ground. One of these triggers, we should say, the steam being shut off, does not hang down, but tucks itself back like a crane's leg. When the engine is in motion, the steam being on, this leg drops, and the two legs hang down. When the driver, however, shuts off his steam, one leg is immediately tucked away. Now these two legs or triggers are connected with an extremely simple series of rods and levers, and they are calculated to run over the two little wedges which we just now examined. One little wedge being up, touches the key, or leg, or trigger of "caution," as the train passes, and the striking of that key lets loose a volume of steam through a whistle, loud enough

to startle up the sleepest of engine-drivers. The other little wedge being up, touches the key of "danger;" but, mind! a trigger ought not to have been touched. Fog, hail, or other causes, may have prevented the driver from perceiving, in good time, the warning on the telegraph; if he has seen it, he shuts off the steam before he gets near the little wedge, and as he shuts the steam off, up goes the little "danger" leg, and rides untouched over its wedge, while the "caution" wedge, which is always up in company with "danger," sets only the whistle going. If, however, it should happen that the driver has neglected to shut off his steam, the "danger" key remains down and is struck; immediately a lever rolls over untouched by the driver's hand, the engine is reversed, the steam shut off, and the break is put upon the wheels. At the same time a hand moves upon a dial, and records that it was not to the driver, but to the safety apparatus, that the stoppage of the train was due.

A plan had once been tried for the mechanical sounding of a "caution" whistle by means of a trigger; but the trigger not being made to glide up an inclined plane, but to strike upon an abrupt obstruction, generally either snapped off, or kicked the obstacle before it on the line of rail.

We now station ourselves beside the little wedges, set the "danger" signal, and bid the locomotive rush

at it, steam on. Instantly, as it touches the appointed spot, the whistle sounds, the pace begins to slacken, and before the engine reaches the protected siding, it is still standing upon the line. We run the engine back, and mount into the tender. We watch the handle, which is to move untouched by human hands. We whiz through the cold October air; a deafening shriek, a rush of steam, and the rolling over of the handle, startle us; the whistle is indefatigable; but the engine seems fatigued, and very shortly we are brought to a dead stop.

This experiment was repeated and modified, the result being at all times a complete success. Having since that day looked over the drawings and the working plans, we feel satisfied that the apparatus is effective, and open to few chances of derangement. It is, of course, not an invention to make vigilance unnecessary; on the contrary, it would be a testimonial to the prudence of all careful drivers, and an inexorable tell-tale, riding with the negligent. In ninety-nine cases it would not be necessary; in the hundredth it would be the saviour of life and property. It would need being put in action once a day, to set the index every morning as the locomotive leaves the station, and to maintain a constant certainty that it remains in working order. It would cost, including signal apparatus fixed upon the line, from twenty to thirty pounds per engine. Less complete forms of

the apparatus would cost less. We may add, that a portable wedge, screwed on the line of rail at any point, will secure the stoppage of a train, apart from signal apparatus.

All that we have to say by way of comment on the matter is, that we, as travellers, having found out the existence of an invention which promises to lessen our risk of life and limb on railway lines, expect that this invention shall be fairly tested by the railway companies, and properly adopted if found good. Small as the risk of railway travelling may be, it ought to be much smaller; the occurrence of a preventible accident is, in plain words, a crime on the part of those who could have prevented it and did not. If Mr. Whitworth's plan be good, no Board of Directors ought to fear the small expense attendant upon its adoption. The money lost by calamities on a line, if put against this outlay, may seem something less; we do not know how that may be. But, may we be allowed to hint, that the loss of credit which follows upon every casualty, is, perhaps, also to be considered; and that the more or less of public confidence may not be inoperative on the value of a railway share?

A ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

BENIGHTED.

TRAVEL on foot in a dark night through a mountain-pass, is not

made pleasant by a sweeping wind, which dashes rain into the face by the pailful. The most powerful emotion excited in the human breast under such circumstances, is a pining after shelter, though it were but the shelter of a charcoal-burner's hut; and an inn then seems to be an institution too completely blissful to be calmly thought about as something actual and near. With my hat well pressed over my forehead to defy the wind; with my clothes containing a much larger quantity of water than of cloth, leather, or frieze; with my succulent boots treading monotonously through the marsh of the footpath, over which I could just make out the lowering shadow of the fir-forest, I plashed along through a mountain-pass in Austria on an exceedingly wild night in September. Now and then, I was obliged to steady myself by planting my staff in the mud, and standing still with my back to the gale for a few minutes. Then, on I went, with heavy measured tread, counting my steps to wile away the time, miscounting them, and judiciously beginning a new calculation.

Battle through trouble, and the haven of rest will be reached at last! Push on through the darkest night, and at length you will find an inn. I found, thus, the Inn of the Pass, its windows all quite dark; the house had shut its eyes and gone to sleep for the night; but then it might be easily awakened. The wooden door, as usual, was wide open, but the real

door of these mountain hostelries, which keeps intruders out, is not composed of wood, but of an immense quantity of bark — and bite, too, possibly. The light slumbers of the dog having been broken by my footfall, I waited patiently until his wrath should have properly fulfilled the uses of a bell and knocker. Barking and howling on the dog's part being, however, the accustomed lullaby of the inmates of the hostelry, the inn continued to sleep soundly. I could not enter without losing some portion of my legs, and therefore proceeded to shout patiently in chorus with the dog, to throw pebbles against windows, and at length, when I was quite hoarse, to stand quiet in the rain,

“Uncomplaining, hoping, till
Clinked the lattice bar,”

and a loud “Who's there?” rewarded the exertions of myself and my brother chorister.

The dog, satisfied with sounds of explanation, accosted me thereafter with a conciliatory growl, and when I groped my way into the dark room, and stretched myself upon a bench over which I had previously tumbled, he resumed his slumbers near my feet. Mine host, entering with a rude oil-lamp, looked at me curiously and disappeared, leaving me in the dark without a syllable of consolation. A swarm of flies, whose night's rest I had broken, hummed and buzzed about me, and I began dreamily to speculate upon the probable result of sleeping in wet clothes upon a board,

and to wonder whether I should not feel less draught if I removed my quarters to the table, and whether there were knives and forks left there, which might be worse bed companions than fleas. Over the knife and fork question I must have fallen asleep, for I was dreaming of hot roast beef when a glare of light awakened me, and, looking up, I saw two damsels, according to the expressive German idiom, drunk with sleep, who had been routed out of their beds, and were getting the table ready for my supper.

From the dream of beef, it was an agreeable transition to the reality of bread-and-cheese. The two stout peasant girls, unmistakeably real, were busily producing wedges of black bread and an inexhaustible amount of goat-milk cheese. As for the mighty beer-glasses, with their bright engraved pewter lids, I did not wonder at the subjects chosen by Dutch painters; for what could there be on earth finer than such beer-glasses, such bread-and-cheese, such a lamp-lighted kitchen, such handy peasant girls? I ate. I smoked my little travelling pipe. Memories and dreams mingled with the fact that a stout waitress was staring sleepily at me out of her dark eyes, and that I was staring sleepily at her; and the fancy that we had been staring at one another sleepily somewhere else, I couldn't remember where. I slept. I have no doubt I went to bed, for it was in bed that I awoke.

No, there was no rain in the

morning! I shaved by a ray of unadulterated sun-light. It was a feast day of the Catholic church, and carts were rattling to the door outside; and there were voices in a hubbub of sound, sparkling all over with laughter; and there was a fellow singing in the mountain dialect:

"The snow has been falling,
And I must stay here,
For visit my darling,
I can't, O dear!

"The snow has been falling,
The mountains are white;
I 've now a new darling,
And *that* 's all right."

I thought the matter of the song extremely questionable; but the melody and manner of it were so blithe that they haunt me still — especially while shaving.

The kitchen, down-stairs, I found full of life and bustle. The guides, who keep none of the church holidays, were fortifying their souls with "schnaps." The church-goers from the mountains, who still had far to go before they reached the pastor, were resting half-way, and bartering and comparing news together. The waitresses were anything but sleepy; the ostler was plunged in a thousand cares; the cattle of the farmers stamped; and chafed their rusty bits outside. On the walls of the room, the pictures were of Hofer and of other champions of the mountains; and, to me, the people talked about their local memories. They told me of the famous defence of that pass during the "French wars;" and how the man who built the inn in

which we then talked, had defended the pass with the desperate energy of a Guerilla, and the success of an unerring shot — how, in fact, he had been the Leonidas of their unsung Thermopylæ.

A fine bold race of men they are who filled this little world; they won my respect at the first glance. The landlord, a powerful young man, came among us with a bold eye, neither blustering nor cringing; he reviewed his guests with a free good-humoured look, such as might grace the face of one of nature's gentlemen.

Then to me, fortified with breakfast, came the ostler, saying that a car was ready — a narrow little one-horsed curiosity; for curious the car must be that is constructed to jog, unshattered, over these rough mountain roads. The horse was capering beside his pole — single horses in Austria are not indulged with shafts — and friend ostler, who was to drive me on to the next village, looked so unutterably contented with the world, laughing to himself out of the fullness of his delight, that I determined to share some part of his shower of good-humour by inducing him to talk to me. Accordingly I won his confidence by the offer of a cigar. Then, to my great astonishment, he began praising the cigars of Milan in very good Italian. That made me curious, and I discovered that he had been a soldier in the fifth battalion of rifles, and had served in Italy.

It had an odd effect to hear this rude mountain peasant garble the

music of Italian with his uncouth dialect, and recall here, among the firs, the plains of Italy. Here, in the pleasant autumn morning, he was eloquent about the tumult and the roar of battle in the disastrous years 1848 and 1849. Unconscious of the horse and cart, and puffing manfully at the cigar, he told, with earnest eyes, how he had loved "Father Radetzky," how the other generals often asked too much from the tired troops, how batteries were captured; how he did not like eating polenta for his dinner; mingling strangely the affairs of history with the story of the ostler. He had become a soldier through the love which he preserved still for the pomp of war, the arms, the gay dress, and the music. But he was a mountaineer when he enlisted; and, on getting his discharge, he hurried back directly to the mountains, resolved to enter into service where he could in his home district, without a sigh for sunny Italy. These mountaineers at home, seem to care little enough for the glories which we travel over sea and land to visit. Take them away, however, they are not easy until the firs again are rustling overhead, and they are comfortably wrapped up in the mists of their own hills.

So our driver spoke with joy of his design to live another summer in his native place. This was a feast day, too, in the next village, and — secret of his abounding happiness — his Dirndl, his sweetheart, was there waiting for him; yes, and we were now very near,

he told me with a voice that came as if his heart were singing under it.

The horse halts, snorting, and pricks up his ears at the loud sound of horns and fiddles in the village inn. Here our ride ends. The driver is gone in a minute, and has already found his place among the happy throng of dancers. That place I suppose to be — from the pair of beaming eyes that joyously greet him — beside his Dirndl. How he prances, and laughs, and swings round the damsel, and slaps his leather-covered thighs, and flings his arm in the air, converting his finger and thumb into castanets! Peace ever rest upon his love!

OUT SHOOTING.

A MERRY sunshine shone over Vienna on the third day of September last. I was sitting in the early morning, looking at the little thimbleful of coffee and the two horns of bread, half roll half cake, which a fat little housemaid had just brought into my room, wondering how, after such slender fare, I could wait patiently for dinner, when a loud, cheery voice came ringing up the stairs, and a young German friend presently flung open my door, and showed himself to my astonished eyes in the complete sporting costume of his country.

He wore a high-crowned, white Tyrolese hat, with a feather in it; a light-green coat, profusely braided; black dress trousers; and a pair of high Indian-rubber

fishing-boots preposterously wide and large; a broad *couteau de chasse* hung at his side; a bran-new belt confined his waist, and he carried a green pouch, large enough, when filled, to load a pony. In short, he was in full sporting trim, and knowing something of the manners of his countrymen, I saw at once that he meant partridge-shooting. Had I been a stranger, I should have supposed that he came to me in costume from a morning rehearsal of Der Freischütz.

Bidding a bull-dog and a terrier, which he had brought with him as sporting dogs, be quiet, while he put their heads into a sort of brass cage, called a muzzle here, he told me, with considerable excitement, that he was off to a shooting party some sixteen miles away, and that he came to fetch me to the gathering.

"It will be a warm day," I said, pulling on my gaiters. "Is there much heavy ground to go over?" — "No," was the reply; "nothing but the regular paths."

I was soon ready, and without more ado we whistled up the bull-dog and the terrier. In five minutes we were whisking away in a light phaeton with four "yuckers" (a species of galloway, bred chiefly in Hungary), along the road to Gumpoldskirchen.

We found a party of some twenty or thirty "guns" assembled at the house of my friend's father. The gentlemen were fortifying themselves against impending fatigue with different varieties of

sausage, cold game, ham, and such matters, in the consumption of which we heartily assisted. Presently, all prepared to sally forth. The weather, as is common in the autumn, had changed since the beginning of the morning, and a pretty keen wind now blew. This nearly blew out the zeal of our companions, and promised to nip the bud of our day's sport; for your true German sportsman does not care much for the actual pursuit of game, if he can only put on his shooting clothes. Since, however, I had hazarded my day upon the speculation, I was indisposed to let the time be lost, and rallied those members of the party with whom I felt myself to be on joking terms. My friend at length travelled up-stairs, and came back with a couple of ample cat-skin muffs, which were to be slung round our necks by means of a cord, to keep our hands warm. Fortified thus, we at length got under way, singing melodious choruses on the pleasures of the chase. The Germans sing much better than they hunt.

I soon found, as we proceeded, that our party was diminishing; when we had quite reached the hunting-ground, I found myself almost alone. Our companions had been dropped by the way singly, like Hop-o'-my-Thumb's crumbs, and formed a line of sporting posts some twenty or thirty yards apart from one another. We then stood at ease for an hour, with a keen wind in our teeth; while a section of our par-

ty took a circuit for the establishment of a circle, within which the game was to be hemmed.

My friend at this time had an opportunity of introducing me to a few stationary brethren. A fat little Sancho, in dress boots, with a coat much too small for his broad back, stood nearest to us. He was armed with a small Swedish rifle, which was loaded with ball. When my friend presented me to him as "Sir Smith," he answered "Mr. Sir, your most obedient servant." The rest were a motley group of officers in uniform, and men in every costume but what we should suppose to be the right one; fine picturesque fellows with sweeping moustaches, good beards, and gorgeously coloured clothes. A painter might have been glad of them, — though certainly an English painter never would have grouped them in a sketch of partridge shooting.

At length a hum along the line informed us that the sport was shortly to begin; and a student from Bonn who had included English in his studies turned to me with some excitement, saying "Sor, if you please now we cotch them will." Assuredly, there galloped hares in plenty down upon us with their heads up, and the partridges were darting upward like rockets in all directions. "Lie quiet," said I to the student, "for here comes a hare!" — "I fear me not," was the reply. The student, shutting both his eyes, let off at the same time both his barrels, and a horrid howl from my

friend's bull-dog, told us the result, which was precisely the reverse of that which was either intended or desired. A sharp fire now rang along our line, and the hare fell. When we took him up, it appeared that our stout little friend with the rifle had the credit of one among the lucky shots; for besides being riddled like a sieve, our victim had his head almost blown off.

In some alarm at these proceedings, I refrained from firing, in order that I might keep a wary and an anxious eye upon the gentleman who had just shot the dog. My relief was inexpressible, when one of the keepers told me that he could do no farther harm, precaution having been taken to load his gun with powder only, and not to put in very much of that.

My next care was to persuade our sportsmen to leash up their dogs, or at least to send them to the rear; for, as the hares came down, the dogs immediately ran at them and gave chase, so that for some time there was no shooting to be had. One gentleman, who established an acquaintance by asking me whether I came "from England out," warned off the game by his stentorian hunting songs; others broke the line, and ran into the circle, thereby exposing their limbs to the attack of small shot; others flogged their dogs, who responded with discordant yells; and all had horns or whistles, into which they blew with lamentable perseverance, when they were not otherwise em-

ployed. I grew at last accustomed to this mode of sport. As the kreis or circle included only too much game, by the time our lines closed we had killed one hundred and forty-five hares, and twenty-three brace of birds.

It was now about three o'clock in the afternoon; for we had begun late, and with one delay or another the day had almost slipped out of our hands. The keener sportsmen of our party were very anxious, therefore, to make the best use of our remaining time. But the appearance of a bevy of ladies wandering towards us through the distant fields, with a few symptoms of lunch, gave us now reason to expect a rest of some duration. So it turned out. Our quarter-master had pitched upon a pleasant nook in one of those elegant little patches of ground, half wood, half shrubbery, which is the favourite resort of pheasants. There, disembarassing ourselves of our guns, which had been slung over the shoulder, after German fashion, we sat down upon the grass. The afternoon had cleared again, and the day now felt to us quite warm after our exercise. The ladies hung their bonnets on the boughs of trees, and lucky beaux obtained the care of shawls and parasols. We grouped ourselves unconsciously into a Watteau picture, and enjoyed one of the pleasantest of luncheons. The light wavy foliage of some young trees formed a bower overhead; a glorious hill-country, with the peaks

of the Schneeberg, bounded the view before us in the distance. Pleasant words and merry tales went round with the good wine, and before long a vagrant fiddle and a strolling flute had been attracted by the distant music of our laughter. The fiddle and the flute made it quite certain to the meanest comprehension that our shooting for the day was over. So we yielded ourselves gladly to a dance.

The peeping of the stars admonished us at last to wander homeward. We departed through the fields and vineyards, singing as we came; for Germans breathe an atmosphere of music. The clear bell-like voices of the young girls sounded very sweetly in the still air of the evening, as we trooped pleasantly along. Of one voice I still remember the soft, liquid, pleading tones; the songstress looked so placid and so gentle, that one felt angels to be possible even on this side of the stars.

And so our shooting party ended.

THE BOBBIN-MILL AT AMBLESIDE.

OCTOBER is the time for the late traveller in the Lake District to wonder why little parties of men are roaming at mid-day on the hill-sides, leaving their business below just as the daylight hours are becoming precious. October is the time for residents in the district to look up anxious-

ly to these hill-sides, and to peep into the recesses of the mountains, to see what woods are to fall this year under the axe. October is the time when the gentleman checks his horse under the great sycamore in the village, or before the market-cross in the little towns, and reads, over the heads of the group on foot, the handbills, nailed up, or stuck on, which tell what lots of coppice-wood are on view for sale during the latter days of the month. October is the time when the land agent, well-booted, makes his way through moss, bog, brambles, and underwood, into every corner of certain plantations, followed by a labourer, who carries a great pot of white or red paint, and a brush, wherewith he marks the wood that is doomed. October is the time when the cooper, and the hooper, and the field-carpenter, and the bobbin-maker, come up from town and village to the mountain side, to inspect the timber and coppice that are to be sold. These are the little parties that the late tourist watches from below. They are not leaving their business in the shortening days. They come here in the course of business, to measure, and inspect, and calculate, and make up their minds how high to go, in bidding on the auction day. It does not follow that they have no pleasure, because they come upon business. It is probable that the weather is delicious. It usually is so towards the end of October, in this region. The air is probably so still that

the wet is heard to drop before the intruders reach the hazels, and the acorn to fall as they pass the larger oaks. The bulrush is as still on the brink of the tarn, as the grey rock which juts into it; and both are reflected, sharp and clear, by waters which are not disturbed by the wing of fly above, or the fin of fish from below.

In that looking-glass, too, may perhaps be seen the first party of wild swans, arriving in good time from the north, and now looking down from their lofty flight, to see where they will alight, and which of these mountain pools has the best promise of withered reeds and rushes for the nest, with seeds and roots and water-insects for food. The sandpipers, which were running about so busily a month ago, are gone; but the stonechat is flitting among the bushes, and click-clicking amidst the silence.

The season has been fine here: it must have been fine, by the quantity of foliage left in the woods. Here and there a dead branch hangs down, torn by the equinoctial winds; but the leaves hang thick: not only the red leaves of the oak, but the spotted leaves of the sycamore, and the lemon-coloured leaves of the birch. The season has been a fine one here; what has it been in Alabama and South Carolina? That is the question which most nearly concerns the bobbin-makers of this party. Their purchases of these coppices depend

mainly on whether the cotton crop in America has been a good or a deficient one. It is of some importance to them whether the mulberries have flourished in Italy and India; and whether the flax has ripened well in Ireland; and whether the farmers at home are caring most about their sheep or their corn; but the grand question is, what the season has been in the cotton-growing states of America. If Manchester is in good spirits, these bobbin-makers on the mountain may make up their minds to pay as high for coppice as they ever do, even to eighteen pounds per acre. If Manchester is low-spirited, they may even refuse to go beyond four pounds per acre. They may resolve to buy, each for himself, ten thousand or twelve thousand feet; or to buy only enough to hold on, until better news shall come to Manchester from over the Atlantic Ocean. Perhaps there may be among the bobbin-makers one as sure of a demand for his article as the coopers and hoopers. There are powder-mills at Elter Water; and, as fire-arms are not out of use yet (nor likely to be), charcoal is wanted; and there is a viewer from the powder-mills out on the hills to-day.

The explorers have examined the mountain ash, and the birch, in the more exposed situations. They now come down among the ash and beech groves; and leap from tuft to tuft in the bogs, after the alder and the willow; and look well to the hazel, and the

aspiring sycamore, in the sheltered recesses. The wood is, for the most part, of from fourteen to sixteen years' growth; though some may be of twenty. Thus, the excursion is to some new place, every October, for nearly twenty years, — the distance, however, is seldom more than twenty miles from any one man's home.

The wood will need a year's seasoning in the sheds of the bobbin-mill; and by that time the prospects of trade may have changed; but it comes to the same thing as if this growing wood were to be used immediately; for there is last year's purchase stored up at home, and more or less of it may be used this year, or left over for next.

In passing from wood to wood, our party winds through streams, and round lakes of arable lands, to reach the islands and promontories of coppice which are scattered between. It is curious that the seasons in America, and the spirits of the Manchester people, should affect the scenery of the Lake District; but it is so. Hundreds of years ago the whole region was covered with wood, except where the Romans made clearings, for a camp here, and a road there. The Saxons afterwards settled on their traces. When the Normans came, and their monks established themselves at Furness, they sent out their husbandmen and herdsmen to till the ground, and to pasture their flocks, farther and farther in the dales, and higher and higher

up the hill-sides, building walls as they went, until the sunshine was let in over wide tracts, and the forest-like look of the region nearly disappeared. Yet, when Wordsworth was young, some old people at Wythburn (about ten miles on the Keswick road, under Helvellyn) told him of the time when the squirrel could go from Wythburn to Keswick on the tops of the trees, without touching the ground. In those days, the people grew their own flax or hemp, and their own wool; and the spinning and weaving were done at home; and itinerant tailors went their rounds through the district, staying at the farm-houses to make up the clothes. It did not occur to any one then (about a hundred years ago) that the woods of the district would be required to make this matter of popular clothing easier to everybody. Hence the felling went on too fast. Many patches of holly and ash were preserved within the higher enclosures, to feed the cattle and sheep, with the sprouts, where no other pasturage could be obtained; but large tracts of rocky soil were laid bare, which had better have remained clothed with wood. Some improvement in the process of weaving had before this taken place. The Kays, father and son, of Bury, in Lancashire, had invented the flying shuttle and the drop-box, by which much time was saved to the weaver, and a wider cloth could be produced by one pair of hands. But there was not thread enough or yarn enough

spun, to keep the shuttle going so fast as was wanted. The weaver had to go about something else, while waiting for the spinners; yet, in thousands of cottages, the wheel was whirring from morning until night, every day but Sundays.

This was a state of things which could not last; for, in regard to the arts of life, a great want is sure to be soon met with a remedy. Several ingenious men invented spinning-machines, during the latter half of the last century, and before its close, it was shown that one thousand threads could be spun by one pair of hands. Instead of the pack-horse toiling along the mountain-path, which was then the only way open from Kendal to Whitehaven, there might now be seen the carrier's waggon, winding round the hills on a broad road, bringing the new cotton fabrics to the "statesmen's" dwellings, but still carrying away the "homespun," in which the Westmoreland folks were as yet dressed. The "single thread" wheels were destined to whirr for some time longer; but a new source of profit was opening to those who held land. There was a call for an infinity of bobbins for the new spinning-machines; and the proprietors of bobbin-mills came from a distance to buy up the coppices of the district. At first, the effect of this new demand was to lay the hill-sides barer than ever; but, as the wood grew again, and its owners saw that the demand was likely to be a lasting one, they

began to foster their woods, and to plant anew on soil which could not grow anything more immediately profitable. They arranged a succession of coppices, so as to render it feasible to sell to the axe one after another, as it reached the age of from fifteen to twenty-one years. Thus, with every extension of the growth of cotton abroad, and of its manufacture at home, there has been a new cherishing of coppice in the Lake District; and much is the beauty of the scenery enhanced by this, and very valuable is the shelter given to flocks, and to human habitations, and to the tilled lands which lie between the woods.

There are myriads of bobbins sent from the neighbourhood of Windermere, all over Lancashire and Yorkshire, and into Scotland and Ireland, and to the United States, and our own colonies, and many to busy Belgium, where the sound of the loom is heard in clusters of towns. The bobbin-mills round Windermere are, five mills (belonging to three establishments) at Stavely; one at Troutbeck; one at Hawkshead; one at Skelwith; and one at Ambleside; all, probably, visible at once from the top of Wansfell. That Ambleside mill was a very humble affair a quarter of a century ago. Let us see what may be found there now.

The viewers have made up their minds about some tracts of coppice on the sides of Wansfell, and we see by their looks that before

the primroses and wood anemones cover the ground, in some dearly loved dells, every sheltering twig will be gone, and only stumps left. The axe will soon be calling out the echoes from the rocks above, and then we shall see piles of fagots, and stacks of bark, awaiting the wains which will come clinking and clanging and creaking along the wintry road. While the viewers go down one side of the mountains to see such portions of Bishop Watson's woods, at Calgarth, as are on sale this year, we will go down the other to Horrox's mill at Ambleside.

Down we go, among the red ferns and green mosses, and through many a boggy spot, to the road, and within hearing of the Stock — the beck (brook) which scampers down the hollow between Wansfell and the road to Patterdale. There lies Ambleside, nestling at the base of the mountain — a mile inland from the lake; and between us and Ambleside is the exquisite waterfall, called Stockghyll Force. Grander cataracts there may be — scarcely a more beautiful one. A breast of rock, feathered with wood, divides the stream exactly in two — and each current takes two leaps; so that the symmetry of the picture is singular. The two lesser falls above, and the two greater below, answer to each other, as by the nicest art; yet the ravine is as wild as if nobody had been here since the old Briton and the wolf hid themselves together from the Romans who were making

a camp at Ambleside, and a road along the ridge of the Troutbeck hills. Along the verge of the ravine and of the woods we go down, catching glimpses through the foliage of white foam, of green and brown stones, of clear gushes of water below, until we see a humble grey roof before us, and observe that the woods are opening, and that the waters are smooth as the oily flow of Niagara above Table Rock — smooth, but rapid, as we see by a red and yellow leaf here and there. Those leaves danced merrily down from the bough, and now they are sailing joyously into the midst of a prodigious hubbub. They are close upon the Weir; and we are close upon the old mill, and the great brown water-wheel — a very dark brown, but shedding diamonds when touched by the sun; and now, in its wet sheen, reflecting the emerald colour of the opposite slope of the dell.

This is not much like visiting Birmingham or Manchester manufactories. For the muddy canal, we have a cataract of water "softer than rain-water," the proprietor assures us, and clear as starlight. The very sight of it, slipping over the Weir, and drowning the stones below, makes one thirsty. Instead of the coiling smoke, we have the balancing gossamer above the stream. The stir from the fall shakes, but spares it. Instead of attic-windows opposite, we have the old rookery. The rooks are our spies and gossips here; and they and the babbling waters seem

to be telling tales against each other, all the year round. The rooks never fail, and the noise never fails. We asked the proprietor whether he had ever to complain of want of water. "Very rarely, indeed," said he. "It is scant only in very hot and dry summers, and has not been so for some years now." "And the noise; is it always like this?" Does he live in the sound of a cataract? O yes! and he never knows it, unless reminded of it. And perhaps his men do not know what an infernal din they are living in, with those circular saws, and the whirring of a multitude of wheels and lathes. We begin to shrink from it, though we have as yet got no further than the old mill. We just look into it as we pass, and find it a mere room, packed now with materials. The path which winds up into the wood was the old road to the mill; and this little yard held all the timber.

It is very different now. We pass and examine large stacks of timber and poles — beech, ash, mountain-ash, sycamore, "seal" (sallow), hazel, birch, and alder. The greater part is stacked under slated roofs; but some piles stand uncovered at present. There is timber thick enough to make posts; and much of fourteen years' growth — as large as a stout man's leg — which is split and dressed into rails. While the circular saws and the lathes are at work, it is as well to make other things, besides bobbins; so we observe a new and

much-improved kind of mangle in the old mill; and besides the posts and rails for fences, we see the legs of bedsteads lying about, and other neat pieces of turnery.

The knots of the stouter wood are sliced off before the splitting; and the peeling is done on the premises, while the wood is fresh. The peel serves for fuel; the baker buys for his ovens the chips and dust which lie almost knee-deep everywhere within the mill. As for the corners, and odds and ends of the wood, they are sold for "kindling" to the neighbours round.

The circular-saws are from Sheffield. The rest of the machinery is home-made. Down in a chamber below the rest of the mill, are the cog-wheels, which are turned by the great water-wheel. There they whirl, smoothly, steadily; and between, and under them, may be seen again the clear gushing waters, and green and grey rocks; and over them the sunny wood, where the latest bees are swinging in the last blossoms of the year. Mr. Horrox's house is completely covered with ivy; and the fuchsia and Chinrose blossom beside the door.

We may seem to dwell long on the natural features of the place; but there is an unspeakable charm in seeing the commonest manufacturing toil cheered and brightened by the presence of that antique and ever-young beauty, who is supposed to be mournfully displaced by the establishment of the arts of life. — We would fain

convey some sense of this charm to our readers. We are thankful to be able to add, that there is here no drawback from the vice which is the curse of the district, — as of too many rural neighbourhoods. The one great pain to the inhabitants of the exquisite valley in which Ambleside lies, is the intemperance of the people. It is not quite so bad as it was; but still, the early walker, who begins the winter day by a walk under the stars, when the last fragment of the gibbous moon hangs over Wansfell, is but too likely to meet the labourer staggering tipsy to his work. In the summer twilight, or the repose of Sunday afternoon, when the mind should be awake and enjoying the interval from bodily labour, too many two-legged brutes may be seen, who have abdicated their prerogative of reason, and are courting disease and early death from drink, amidst a scene and an air which should make men wise and long-lived. It is pretty sure that no such sinner belongs to this mill. It is known that Mr. Horrox will employ none such. From the moment that a man is found to have been drunk, he must come no more there. And this is an important discouragement of vice; for nine-and-twenty men and boys (only eight boys) are employed at the mill; and that is a number which tells upon so small a population as the people of Ambleside.

They are paid by the gross of bobbins; and they earn from fourteen shillings to twenty-three

shillings a week, at an average of fourpence per gross. There must be a change soon. The “thread-men,” (spinners of sewing-cotton) in manufacturing towns, have new machinery, by which bobbins can be produced at five farthings, which here cost fourpence half-penny. There have been contentions and strikes in those towns, ending, as strikes on account of machinery always do: and the change must reach this place in natural course.

And now for the process. The wood being sorted, — some sold in blocks to the turners at so much per solid foot, and poles to the hoopers by the thousand (six score to the hundred), — the tree-stem to be wrought is brought to the circular saw. It is first cut across into blocks. Then, the block is split into slices. A man and boy sit opposite each other, at each end of the saw. The man applies the block, and pushes it from him some way; and the boy finishes the severance by drawing it towards him; — their fingers being thus kept out of danger. No accidents of consequence have happened at this mill; but, elsewhere, it has been no uncommon thing for a careless workman to have all the fingers of one hand sawn off across the middle. The wood is sliced into squares, about a quarter of an inch thick, and of different sizes, according to the sort of bobbin, of which these slices are to make the ends. The squares are baked, dry as a brown crust, in an outhouse which has

an iron floor, heated by a furnace beneath. On this floor the squares are laid in rows, thick and close, and shut in until they are done enough. After they are cool, they are bored with a round hole in the middle, which is to receive the shank. Two slices are glued together, — the corners of one crossing the sides of the other, that the grain may cross, and obviate fracture. One has a smaller hole than the other, that the end of the shank may fit in more securely. When glued, the cross-pieces are strung on a round iron bar, and screwed tight upon each other, to prevent warping. While they are thus drying, the shank is preparing.

The shank is made round, in the lathe. It has next to be bored. This is done by boys, who simply drive the end against the steel borer which is turned by machinery. In an instant of time, the borer makes its way through to the inner end. The shank goes again to the lathe, to be made a little smaller at each end, in order to fit into the holes in the cross-pieces. Next, the end and the shank are to be united. A little boy, sitting at a glue-pot, holds a dauber (as we may call it), which is made of two rings, answering to the margins of the two holes in the cross-pieces. He dabs these holes with glue, and hands the pieces to a man at his elbow, who inserts the end of the shank, and puts it in the way of a sharp rap from a driven hammer, which fixes it in its place. When both

ends are thus glued on, we have a bobbin; but with ends that are square, large, and rough. The bobbin goes to a lathe, where, in turning, it is met by a stout, three-sided sharp tooth or blade, which, quicker than the eye can follow, cuts off the corners, and leaves a bobbin, perfect in shape. It is still rough, however; and it must be finished in the lathe; — rounded at the edges, and smoothed, and, if necessary, grooved.

Some bobbins, wanted for certain kinds of spinning, must have their bore lined with a smoother substance than the ordinary wood. When they are thus lined, they are said to be "bushed." Some are "bushed" with metal; some with box-wood. In some, the "bush" goes only part of the way through the bore; in others, the whole way. When the lining is of box, the bobbin and the "bush" are fluted, in order to fit more firmly into each other. All who have examined bobbins may remember that a circle of lighter or darker wood appears round the bore. This is the "bush."

Now we have bobbins before us of various shapes and sizes; some for silk; some for flax; some for wool, as well as the myriads for cotton; and here are also parts of the shuttle of the Manchester weaver. Does anything remain to be done? Yes; some buyers like to have their bobbins dyed; some prefer them black; some, oak colour; some, yellow. The black dye is obtained from logwood and from copperas; the oak from

catechu and fustic; and the yellow from fustic, with a little alum. The dye certainly gives a finished appearance to the bobbins; and ladies know that, when buying sewing cotton. The eye is drawn towards the neatness of black or oak-coloured bobbins, in preference to the undyed, — other things being equal. The dyeing is done by boiling the bobbins in coppers, with the chemical materials.

We were tempted to follow the fagots of poles down to the hooper's, to see what was doing there. The new-world spirit, which is found wherever machinery is whirling, has not made its way yet into the hoopers' sheds in Ambleside. Here is no head-splitting din — no cloud of wood-dust, which visibly fills the nostrils of the turners at the lathe, and makes the visitor inquire about diseases of the lungs. Here, half-a-dozen men and boys are at work, with no newer machinery than "the horse," "the mare," "the dog," and the hoop. Do our readers wonder how the horse, the mare, and the dog can help in making hoops? The answer is, these are nicknames, given to the sort of bench on which the workman sits, in different stages of hoop-making. To cleave the poles, the man sits on a raised log, "the horse," and simply splits the unpeeled wood into two or four pieces, with an axe. These pieces are taken possession of by the boy on "the mare," who, by a treadle, raises or lets fall a block, to hold

fast his strip of wood, which he thins and equalises with a two-handled knife, to render it smooth, and pliable for the "bending" machine. This machine consists simply of a pair of rollers turned by a cog-wheel and a winch: the strip of wood being drawn out between the rollers.

Next, the strips have to be made into hoops. A man who sits in the middle of the shed, with a stout model hoop on his knees, bends the strip round within the model, takes it out, and ties it with string, and then bends within it another and another strip, (tying none but the first), until he has made a compact mass of hooping. Nothing can well be slower, or more primitive.

Still, the business is a profitable one. Hoops are sent from Ambleside over the far parts of the globe. The very largest go to Liverpool. These sell for about five pounds per thousand (six score to the hundred). In seasons when coppers are scarce, or when the demand for casks is great, coopers have given as much as nine or ten pounds per thousand for hoops. This cannot, however, go on. If it be true that, by new machinery, a porter barrel can be made complete, from the tree to the heading, in five minutes, it cannot be that the slow and clumsy method of fashioning hoops by hand can remain, even in the old-fashioned Lake District.

We may soon be having some instrument which will rain hoops as a fire-work gives out sparks, or

as rings of luminous vapour ascend
from the chemical lecturer's
magic wine-glass. Meanwhile,
"the horse," "the mare," and
"the dog," with their stiff backs
and wooden heads, look as if they
did not mean to budge, and had
never heard of change.

ROOM IN THE WORLD.

THERE is room in the world for the
wealthy and great,
For princes to reign in magnificent state;
For the courtier to bend, for the noble to
sue,
If the hearts of all these be but honest
and true.

And there's room in the world for the
lowly and meek,
For the hard horny hand, and the toil-
furrow'd cheek;
For the scholar to think, for the mer-
chant to trade,
So these are found upright and just in
their grade.

But room there is none for the wicked;
and naught,
For the souls that with teeming corrup-
tion are fraught;
The world would be small were its oceans
all land,
To harbour and feed such a pestilent
band.

Root out from among ye, by teaching the
mind,
By training the heart, this chief curse of
mankind!
'T is a duty ye owe to the forthcoming
race —
Confess it in time, and discharge it with
grace!

CHIPS.

WONDERFUL SWALLOWS.

IN a previous article, vol. X.
page 306, we presented our readers
with a Zoological Problem — the
substance of which was the curious
fact that a Serpent in the Zoologi-
cal Gardens of the Regent's Park
had thought fit to swallow his bed,
— to wit, a large railway blanket
wrapper, instead of two rabbits
which had been left him for supper.
The problem propounded was
the life or death of the Serpent,
according to his ability or inability
to dispose of so extraordinary a
mass of unnatural food. He
swallowed the blanket on the
3rd of October; he was still per-
severing in his efforts to digest it,
when we last wrote, on the 28th of
October.

We have now to announce that
the Serpent, acting upon the old
proverb that "discretion is the
better part of valour," has finally
abandoned the attempt, having
neither digested the blanket nor
died of it; but has wisely evaded
the dangerous solution of the
problem, by disgorging it, after
persevering in retaining it during
a period of thirty-six days. The
change which had taken place in
his mind was discovered by the
watchman on the 8th of November
on going his nightly rounds. It was
in the middle of the night, but he
presently called another watch-
man to his side, and entering the
Serpent's case, assisted the reptile
— both the watchmen giving a slow

careful pull at one end — in disgorging the blanket.

We have since seen the blanket. It is, as we stated, the usual rough railway wrapper. It is about five feet wide, and six feet long. The wrapper is entire, with the exception of a few small holes and rents, and an appearance of rottenness in two or three places. The colours, also, are nearly all discharged, the fabric being now of a dingy slaty grey.

The Serpent, though rather "delicate" since this affair, seems likely to do well. He ate nothing after disgorging the blanket, during a whole week; but has just taken a small rabbit. He continues to drink much water. The blanket has, no doubt, absorbed more moisture than he could conveniently spare, during the five weeks it has lain in his inside.

One of the keepers informed us, that this was not the first time such a feat had been attempted in the Gardens; and added that on the previous occasion the Serpent had persevered to the last, and remained the victor of his blanket. But the record of this performance has not been very carefully preserved, and we cannot say that we feel perfectly satisfied on the point.

The serpent-species, however, have no claim to a monopoly in the way of eccentric eating. The taste of other creatures has often been equally unaccountable. Among the earliest recollections

of our childhood the figure of a large house-dog holds a prominent position. He was of the mongrel species commonly known as a retriever, — black, gaunt, and hideous. He was remarkable both for his powers of abstinence and for his appetite; the latter being rather voracious than discriminating. No rubbish came amiss to him; but woollen manufactures seemed peculiarly grateful to his palate. We well remember our feeling of dismay on letting fall a woollen glove, of tiny dimensions, from our nursery window, in sight of "Ned," who was gambling beneath. We rushed down stairs, and out into the garden; but arrived too late — the mangled remains of our little property were just disappearing down the throat of the thief. A boy's stiff cloth cap — rather a tough morsel, one would think — was left upon the grass while the owner was at play, and shared the same fate. A large sheet of brown paper, on another occasion, afforded him a dainty meal. But Ned could do more than this. The housekeeper was sitting by the kitchen fire one winter afternoon, engaged in darning coarse cloths, with a large piece of flannel on her knee, stuck full of needles of a large size; in fact, stocking-needles; when in stalked Ned, grim and awkward, as usual. Observing the tempting piece of flannel, he at once pounced upon it, and swallowed it, *needles and all*, before the terrified sempstress could interfere! This unprecedented feat excited

universal consternation in the household; but Ned galloped and tumbled about as before, apparently not in the least discomposed by his perilous repast. Nor did he ever seem the worse for it: he lived many years after, and died at last, not of indigestion, but old age. The history of Ned is both attested and preserved in the family archives of Holbrooke House, Derbyshire.

But as for the wonders of digestion in some creatures, the daring and romantic character of their exploits in attempting novelties as objects of food — we know of few that can approach to any rivalry with the powers of the ostrich. One day a carpenter, in the Regent's Park Gardens, was at work in a stable, the side of which was open to a corner of the cage of an ostrich. A pretty nursery-maid chanced to pass that way, and the carpenter having engaged her in conversation, ceased his work for a while, and stood smiling and chatting, with his hands behind him; in which he held a gimlet he had been using. His back was towards the cage. The ostrich observed the gimlet — saw that it was nice — and, darting forth his head and long neck between the bars, snapped it out of the carpenter's hands. The man turned hastily round, but before he could make an effort to regain his gimlet, the ostrich gave a toss with his head, the gimlet disappeared, his neck made a stiff arch for a moment, and the gimlet was safely down.

But the performances of the bird were not to cease with this feat; his reputation was to have other facts to rest upon. Not long after, he saw a young gentleman standing near his cage, displaying, to a friend, a knife which he had just purchased. It was a many-bladed knife. Directly the ostrich caught sight of this, he knew that it must be very good indeed. Watching his opportunity, he made a sudden dart upon it, and caught it in his beak. The gentleman made a rush at the bars of the cage; but the ostrich, taking a long stride back, stood out of reach, with an insolent straddle, in the middle of his cage; and, with one jerk of his neck, bolted the delicious curiosity.

The keepers watched the bird, and examined his cage very narrowly for a long time; but no traces of his preposterous fancies were ever restored to sight, neither did the ostrich appear in any degree incommoded.

Three months after these performances, the ostrich, from some unknown cause or other, got into a bad state of mind with the bars of his cage, and in a contest which ensued, he broke his back. His death speedily followed, and a *post-mortem* examination was immediately made; but no trace whatever, either of the gimlet or the many-bladed knife, was discovered in any part of his wonderful interior.

SONNET.

ON MR. LOUGH'S STATUE OF
"LADY MACBETH."

IF this dread image were by ocean
thrown
Amidst some people who have never yet
Learn'd in the mind's creations to forget
Life's pressure, and the melancholy
stone
Were on a rock for savage wonder set,
Methinks some peak, from Shakespeare's
world unknown,
Would loom on spirits reverential grown
To strange divinity — as if they met
A bodied fragment of the poet's soul; —
And, while the spectral gaze and withering
hand
Urge silence such as that which death's
control
Rules, on the thoughts of that astonish'd
band
Shapes from the noblest scenes by mortal
plann'd
Would rise, and breathe the grandeur of
the whole.

A CHILD'S HISTORY OF
ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XI.

IN the year of our Lord one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine, Richard of the Lion Heart succeeded to the throne of King Henry the Second, whose parental heart he had done so much to break. He had been, as we have seen, a rebel from his boyhood; but, the moment he became a King against whom others might rebel, he found out that rebellion was a great wickedness. In the heat of this pious discovery, he punished all the leading people

who had befriended him against his father. He could scarcely have done anything that would have been a better instance of his real nature, or a better warning to fawners and parasites not to trust in lion-hearted princes.

He likewise put his late father's treasurer in chains and locked him up in a dungeon, from which he was not set free until he had relinquished, not only all the crown treasure, but all his own money too. So, Richard certainly got the Lion's share of the wealth of this wretched treasurer, whether he had a Lion's heart or not.

He was crowned King of England, with great pomp, at Westminster: walking to the Cathedral under a silken canopy stretched on the tops of four lances, each carried by a great lord. On the day of his coronation, a dreadful murdering of the Jews took place, which seems to have given great delight to numbers of savage persons calling themselves Christians. The King had issued a proclamation forbidding the Jews (who were generally hated, though they were the best and most useful merchants in England) to appear at the ceremony; but as they had assembled in London from all parts, bringing presents to show their respect for the new Sovereign, some of them ventured down to Westminster Hall with their gifts; which were very readily accepted. It is supposed, now, that some noisy fellow in the

crowd, pretending to be a very delicate Christian, set up a howl at this, and struck a Jew who was trying to get in at the Hall door with his present. A riot arose. The Jews who had got into the Hall were driven forth; and some of the rabble cried out that the new King had commanded the unbelieving race to be put to death. Thereupon the crowd rushed through the narrow streets of the city, slaughtering all the Jews they met; and when they could find no more out of doors (on account of their having fled to their houses, and fastened themselves in) they ran madly about, breaking open all the houses where the Jews lived, rushing in and stabbing or spearing them, sometimes even flinging old people and children out of window into blazing fires they had lighted up below. This great cruelty lasted four-and-twenty hours, and only three men were punished for it. Even they forfeited their lives: not for murdering and robbing the Jews, but for burning the houses of some Christians.

King Richard, who was a strong restless burly man, with one idea always in his head, and that the very troublesome idea of breaking the heads of other men, was mightily impatient to go on a Crusade to the Holy Land, with a great army. As great armies could not be raised to go, even to the Holy Land, without a great deal of money, he sold the Crown domains, and even the high offices of State: recklessly appointing

noblemen to rule over his English subjects, not because they were fit to govern, but because they could pay high for the privilege. In this way, and by selling pardons at a dear rate, and by all kinds of avarice and oppression, he scraped together a large treasure. He then appointed two Bishops to take care of his kingdom in his absence, and gave great powers and possessions to his brother John, to secure his friendship. John would rather have been made Regent or Governor of England; but he was a sly man, and friendly to the expedition; saying to himself, no doubt, "The more fighting, the more chance of my brother being killed; and when he is killed, then I become King John!"

Before the newly levied army departed from England, the recruits and the general populace distinguished themselves by astonishing cruelties on the unfortunate Jews: whom, in many large towns, they murdered by hundreds in the most horrible manner. At York, a large body of Jews took refuge in the Castle, in the absence of its Governor, after the wives and children of many of them had been slain before their eyes. Presently came the Governor, and demanded admission. "How can we give it thee, O Governor!" said the Jews upon the walls, "when, if we open the gate by so much as the width of a foot, the roaring crowd behind thee will press in and kill us!" Upon this,

the unjust Governor became angry, and told the people that he approved of their killing those Jews; and a mischievous maniac of a friar, dressed all in white, put himself at the head of the assault, and they assaulted the Castle for three days. Then said JOCEN, the head-Jew, to the rest (who was a Rabbi or Priest), "Brethren, there is no hope for us with the Christians who are hammering at the gates and walls, and who must soon break in. As we and our wives and children must die, either by Christian hands, or by our own, let it be by our own. Let us destroy by fire what jewels and other treasure we have here, then fire the castle, and then perish!" A few could not resolve to do this, but the greater part complied. They made a blazing heap of all their valuables, and, when those were consumed, set the castle in flames. While the flames roared and crackled round them, and, shooting up into the sky, turned it blood-red, Jocen cut the throat of his beloved wife, and stabbed himself. All the others who had wives or children, did the like dreadful deed. When the populace broke in, they found (except the trembling few cowering in corners, whom they soon killed) only heaps of greasy cinders, with here and there something like part of the blackened trunk of a burnt tree, but which had lately been a human creature, formed by the beneficent hand of God, as they were.

After this bad beginning, Rich-

ard and his troops went on, in no very good manner, with what it was the fashion of the time to call their Holy Crusade. It was undertaken jointly by the King of England and his old friend Philip of France. They commenced the business by reviewing their forces, to the number of one hundred thousand men. Afterwards, they severally embarked their troops for Messina, in Sicily, which was appointed as the next place of meeting. King Richard's sister had married the King of this place, but he was dead; and his uncle TANCRED had usurped the crown, cast the Royal Widow into prison, and possessed himself of her estates. Richard fiercely demanded his sister's release, the restoration of her lands, and (according to the Royal custom of the Island) that she should have a golden chair, a golden table, four-and-twenty silver cups, and four-and-twenty silver dishes. As he was too powerful to be successfully resisted, Tancred yielded to his demands, and then the French King grew jealous, and complained that the English King wanted to be absolute in the Island of Messina and everywhere else. Richard, however, cared little or nothing for this complaint, and in consideration of a present of twenty thousand pieces of gold, promised his pretty little nephew ARTHUR, then a child of two years old, in marriage to Tancred's daughter. We shall hear again of pretty little Arthur by-and-bye.

This Sicilian affair arranged without anybody's brains being knocked out (which must have rather disappointed him), King Richard took his sister away, and also a fair lady named BERENGARIA, with whom he had fallen in love in France, and whom his mother, Queen Eleanor (so long in prison, you remember, but released by Richard on his coming to the Throne), had brought out there to be his wife; and sailed with them for Cyprus. He soon had the pleasure of fighting the King of the Island of Cyprus, for allowing his subjects to pillage some of the English troops who were shipwrecked on the shore; and easily conquering this poor monarch, he seized his only daughter, to be a companion to the Lady Berengaria, and put the King himself into silver fetters. This done, he sailed away again with his mother, sister, wife, and the captive princess, and soon arrived before the town of Acre, which the French King with his fleet was besieging from the sea. But the French King was in no triumphant condition, for his army had been thinned by the swords of the Saracens, and wasted by the plague; and SALADIN the brave Sultan of the bold Turks, at the head of a numerous army, was at that time gallantly defending the place, from the hills that rise above it.

Wherever this united army of Crusaders went, they agreed in nothing except in gaming, drinking, and quarrelling, in a most

unholy manner; in debauching the people among whom they tarried, whether they were friends or foes; and in carrying disturbance and ruin into quiet places. The French King was jealous of the English King, and the English King was jealous of the French King, and the disorderly and violent soldiers of the two nations were jealous of one another; consequently, the two kings could not at first agree, even upon a joint assault on Acre, but when they did make up their quarrel for that purpose, the Saracens promised to yield the town, to give up to the Christians the wood of the Holy Cross, to set at liberty all their Christian captives, and to pay two hundred thousand pieces of gold. All this was to be done within forty days; but, not being done, King Richard ordered some three thousand Saracen prisoners to be brought out in the front of his camp, and there, in full view of their own countrymen, to be deliberately butchered.

The French King had no part in this atrocity; for he was by that time travelling homeward with the greater part of his men; being offended by the overbearing conduct of the English King; being anxious to look after his own dominions; and being ill besides from the unwholesome air of that hot and sandy country. King Richard carried on the war without him, and remained in the East, meeting with a variety of adventures, nearly a year and a half. Every night when his army

was on the march, and came to a halt, the heralds cried out three times, to remind all the soldiers of the cause in which they were engaged, "Save the Holy Sepulchre!" and then all the soldiers knelt, and said "Amen!" Marching or encamped, the army had continually to strive with the hot air of the glaring desert, or with the Saracen soldiers animated and directed by the brave Saladin, or with both together. Sickness and death, battle and wounds, were always among them; but through every difficulty King Richard fought like a giant, and worked like a common labourer. Long and long after he was quiet in his grave, his terrible battle-axe with twenty English pounds of English steel in its mighty head was a legend among the Saracens; and when all the Saracen and Christian hosts had been dust for many a year, if a Saracen horse started at any object by the wayside, his rider would exclaim, "What dost thou fear? Dost thou think King Richard is behind it?"

No one admired this king's renown for bravery more than Saladin himself, who was a generous and gallant enemy. When Richard lay ill of a fever, Saladin sent him fresh fruits from Damascus, and snow from the mountain tops. Courtly messages and compliments were frequently exchanged between them — and then King Richard would mount his horse and kill as many Saracens as he could; and Saladin would mount his, and kill as many

Christians as he could. In this way King Richard fought to his heart's content at Arsoof and at Jaffa; and finding himself with nothing exciting to do at Ascalon, except to rebuild, for his own defence, some fortifications there which the Saracens had destroyed, he kicked his ally the Duke of Austria, for being too proud to work at them.

The army at last came within sight of the Holy City of Jerusalem; but, being then a mere nest of jealousy, and quarrelling and fighting, soon retired, and agreed with the Saracens upon a truce for three years, three months, three days, and three hours. Then, the English Christians, protected by the noble Saladin from Saracen revenge, visited Our Saviour's tomb; and then King Richard embarked with a small force at Acre to return home.

But he was shipwrecked in the Adriatic Sea, and was fain to pass through Germany, under an assumed name. Now, there were many people in Germany who had served in the Holy Land under that proud Duke of Austria who had been kicked; and some of them easily recognising a man so remarkable as King Richard, carried their intelligence to the kicked Duke, who straightway took him prisoner at a little inn near Vienna.

The Duke's master the Emperor of Germany, and the King of France, were equally delighted to have so troublesome a monarch

in safekeeping. Friendships which are founded on a partnership in doing wrong, are never true; and the King of France was, now, quite as heartily King Richard's foe, as he had ever been his friend in his unnatural conduct to his father. He monstrously pretended that King Richard had designed to poison him in the East; he charged him with having murdered there, a man whom he had in truth befriended; he bribed the Emperor of Germany to keep him close prisoner; and finally, through the plotting of these two princes, Richard was brought before the German legislature, charged with the foregoing crimes, and many others. But, he defended himself so well, that many of the assembly were moved to tears by his eloquence and earnestness. It was decided that he should be treated, during the rest of his captivity, in a manner more becoming his dignity than he had been, and that he should be set free on the payment of a heavy ransom. This ransom the English people willingly raised. When Queen Eleanor took it over to Germany, it was at first evaded and refused. But, she appealed to the honour of all the princes of the German Empire, and appealed so well that it was accepted, and the King released. Thereupon, the King of France wrote to Prince John — "Take care of thyself. The devil is unchained!"

Prince John had reason to fear his brother, for he had been a traitor to him in his captivity.

He had secretly joined the French King; had vowed to the English nobles and people that his brother was dead; and had vainly tried to seize the crown. He was now in France, at a place called Evreux. Being the meanest and basest of men, he contrived a mean and base expedient for making himself acceptable to his brother. He invited the French officers of the garrison in that town to dinner, murdered them all, and then took the fortress. With this recommendation to the goodwill of a lion-hearted monarch, he hastened to King Richard, fell on his knees before him, and obtained the intercession of Queen Eleanor. "I forgive him," said the King, "and I hope I may forget the injury he has done me, as easily as he will forget my pardon."

While King Richard was in Sicily, there had been trouble in his dominions at home; one of the bishops whom he had left in charge thereof arresting the other, and making, in his pride and ambition, as great a show as if he were King himself. But, the King hearing of it at Messina, and appointing a new Regency, this LONGCHAMP (for that was his name) had fled to France in a woman's dress, and had there been encouraged and supported by the French King. With all these causes of offence against Philip in his mind, King Richard had no sooner been welcomed home by his enthusiastic subjects with great display and splendour, and rejoicing, and had no sooner been

crowned afresh at Winchester, than he resolved to show the French King that the Devil was unchained indeed, and made war against him with great fury.

There was fresh trouble at home about this time, arising out of the discontents of the poor people, who complained that they were far more heavily taxed than the rich, and who found a spirited champion in WILLIAM FITZ-OSBERT, nicknamed **LONGBEARD**. He became the leader of a secret society, comprising fifty thousand men; was taken by surprise; stabbed the citizen who first laid hands upon him; and retreated, bravely fighting, to a church, which he maintained four days, until he was dislodged by fire and run through the body as he came out. He was not killed, though; for he was dragged at the tail of a horse, half-dead, to Smithfield, and there hanged. This was long a favourite remedy for silencing the peoples' advocates; but as we go on with this history, I fancy we shall find them difficult to make an end of, for all that.

The war, delayed occasionally by a truce, was still in progress when a certain Lord named **VIDOMAR**, Viscount of Limoges, chanced to find in his ground a treasure of ancient coins. As the King's vassal, he sent his sovereign half of it; but the King claimed the whole. The lord refused to yield the whole. The King besieged the lord in his castle, swore that he would take the castle by

storm, and hang every man of its defenders on the battlements.

There was a strange old song in that part of the country, to the effect that in Limoges an arrow would be made by which King Richard would die. It may be that **BERTRAND DE GOURDON**, a young man who was one of the defenders of the castle, had often sung it or heard it sung, of a winter night, and remembered it when he saw, from his post upon the ramparts, the King attended only by his chief officer, riding below the walls, surveying the place. He drew an arrow to the head, took steady aim, said between his teeth, "Now I pray God speed thee well!" discharged it, and struck the King in the left shoulder.

Although the wound was not at first considered dangerous, it was severe enough to cause the King to retire to his tent, and direct the assault to be made without him. The castle was taken, and every man of its defenders was hanged, as the King had sworn they should be, except Bertrand de Gourdon, who was reserved until the royal pleasure respecting him should be known.

By that time, unskilful treatment had made the wound mortal, and the King knew that he was dying. He directed Bertrand to be brought into his tent. The young man was brought there, heavily chained. King Richard looked at him steadily. He looked, as steadily, at the King.

"Knave!" said King Richard.

"What have I done to thee that thou shouldest take my life?"

"What hast thou done to me?" replied the young man. "With thine own hands thou hast killed my father and my two brothers. Myself thou wouldest have hanged. Let me die, now, by any torture that thou wilt. My comfort is, that no torture can save Thee. Thou too must die; and, through me, the world is quit of thee!"

Again the King looked at the young man steadily. Again the young man looked steadily at him. Perhaps some remembrance of his generous enemy Saladin, who was not a Christian, came into the mind of the dying King.

"Youth!" he said, "I forgive thee. Go unhurt!"

Then, turning to the chief officer who had been riding in his company when he received the wound, King Richard said:

"Take off his chains, give him a hundred shillings, and let him depart."

He sunk down on his couch, and a dark mist seemed in his weakened eyes to fill the tent wherein he had so often rested, and he died. His age was forty-two; he had reigned ten years. His last command was not obeyed, for the chief officer flayed Bertrand de Gourdon alive, and hanged him.

There is an old tune yet known — a sorrowful air will sometimes outlive many generations of strong men, and even last longer than battle-axes with twenty pounds of

steel in the head — by which this King is said to have been discovered in his captivity. BLONDEL, a favourite Minstrel of King Richard, as the story relates, faithfully seeking his Royal master, went singing it outside the gloomy walls of many foreign fortresses and prisons, until at last he heard it echoed from within a dungeon and knew the voice, and cried out in an ecstasy, "O Richard! O my King!" You may believe it if you like; it would be easy to believe worse things. Richard was himself a Minstrel and a Poet. If he had not been a Prince too, he might have been a better man perhaps, and might have gone out of the world with less bloodshed and waste of life to answer for.

MY UNCLE.

THE most remarkable man of any age or country, is My Uncle. It is neither in family pride, nor in a gush of gratitude for overwhelming obligations in the nature of debts paid, or fortune inherited or expected; but it is on mature consideration, and with the light of Tooke's Pantheon, Lempriere, and the Biographie Universelle, beaming from my book-shelves, that I persist in the conviction that My Uncle is a very remarkable, and a truly great man.

Osymandes, the Egyptian conqueror (vulgarly called Sesostris) was a great man. Julius Cæsar was a great man; so (in spite of the

Quarterly Review) was Napoleon Buonaparte. His late Royal Highness the Duke of York, Bishop of Osnaburgh, and Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces, was a great man. Mr. William Cobbett, the implacable foe of princes, turnpike-keepers, bank notes, and the Times newspaper, was another great man. Mr. Nathan Meyer Rothschild was also a great man. But My Uncle is a concentration of all the different sorts of greatness by which these great men were severally distinguished: — he was born great; he has had greatness thrust upon him; he has achieved greatness.

That my Uncle was born great, his family-tree will attest. The roots of his genealogy are so venerable, that I have dug in vain for them amidst the earliest traditions of the Western World; but, turning to the East, I have discovered that My Uncle — like gunpowder, the mariner's compass, the art of printing, and the treadmill — owes his origin to China. Considerably after (I now follow a respectable Chinese historiographer) — considerably after *Yan* (Heaven) was separated from *Yin* (Earth), and when Pwan-koo (who reigned forty-five thousand years) ruled the earth from its core and centre, to wit, the Flowery Land, My Uncle's ancestors were prosperous gentlemen. They have continued to flourish with unabated prosperity down to the present date, under the enlightened Tao-Kwang.*

* See Davis's "Chinese," vol. ii., p. 438, First Edition.

In regard to the first appearance of his family in Europe, My Uncle is fond of asserting that Charlemagne was, in early life, a cadet of the transplanted branch of his ancestors; but, I confess that none of the authorities I have consulted support him in that pardonable boast. The most I have been able to do for My Uncle in this wise, has been to trace his more immediate European progenitor to a physician who established a lucrative medical practice, somewhere about the beginning of the thirteenth century, at Florence, in Tuscan Italy. As he left an ample fortune, gained by the exercise of his medical skill, his grateful successors took their name from his profession — a name which illuminates the page of history, and gives lustre to the annals of Art — MEDICI. The offshoots of this illustrious race — from which My Uncle has been handed down in direct descent — removed, early in the fifteenth century, to Milan, took to trade, and were called, indifferently, when they travelled, "Lombards." It must be understood that these Lombards did not retain the family name; their name having since become Legion. But the heraldic insignia of the Medici, derived from their ancestor's calling, they have most rigidly preserved, unto the present hour. No change of country; no vicissitude of trade; no commercial crisis; no persecution; no prosperity; has induced My Uncle's family to abandon their arms,

Whether trading in Lombardy in the Middle Ages; or giving their name, at a later period, to the locality they inhabited the City of London; or finally distributed, as we now find them, over the streets and amidst the necessitous populations of modern cities; the simple blazonry of the Medici, still denotes the abiding-places of My Uncle's race. It consists of three giant boluses, or, pendant, opposed — two to one.

Having shown that My Uncle was born great, I have next to show how My Uncle has achieved greatness. To the common-place virtue of minding their own business, not only the merchant princes of Italy, but those of the British capital must mainly owe their fortunes. This virtue My Uncle possesses in a degree the more remarkable, by reason of the temptations continually presented to him of intermeddling with the affairs of others. Although the daily depository of commercial and pecuniary confidences, he is so far from abusing the trust reposed in him, that he never was known to divulge the secrets of a single client. While he seems to be a most mysterious old gentleman, My Uncle's mystery really consists in the art of keeping his eye steadily fixed on the main chance.

In London alone My Uncle conducts upwards of four hundred establishments, each trading on a capital varying from two thousand to fourteen thousand pounds. His gross metropolitan principal is

two millions and a quarter sterling; not to mention an everflowing and constantly-accumulating interest, averaging from fifteen to twenty per cent. per annum. Without taking into the present calculation his provincial business, the aggregate of My Uncle's immense variety of separate transactions in *London alone* during the year 1849 was twenty four millions; the average at each of his places of business, sixty thousand. My Uncle's affairs are publicly recognised as of the most important description. Acts of Parliament have been passed, expressly for his guidance and protection. He has a Fire and Life Assurance office of his own; and a weekly newspaper solely devoted to his business. This commercial point of greatness is the more extraordinary, from its having been obtained by means of a description of dealing by which almost every other man but My Uncle is certain to lose. To buy, and to sell, and to live by the profit, generally requires no uncommon capacity; but it demands a superior order of talents to live, as My Uncle lives, by lending.

Although my Uncle is, in a small way, on a large scale, a banker; yet he is a banker whose operations are of a much more complicated character than those now carried on in Lombard Street. The deposits upon which he issues his paper are more varied, and demand a wider range of judgment than the ordinary banker needs to exercise. He is obliged to possess

an expanded practical knowledge of the value of securities, ranging over every portable article in existence. Here is one of My Uncle's notes: —

John Triball

London,

14 November 1851

Watch, Chain & Key

*& 2 —
Chas. de Montague
102 St. James Square*

2345 A

This document, which is partly a voucher, partly a deposit note (and, like all deposit notes, negotiable only to a limited extent), is the result of a transaction by which a portion of the passive capital, of Mr. Charles de Montague has been temporarily turned into active capital. Some demand for money has been made upon Mr. de Montague, which he has been unable to meet *in* money. He therefore has recourse to My Uncle, who takes his watch and appendages as security for an advance of forty shillings; on condition that Mr. de Montague shall, before the expiration of twelve months, return de said forty shillings together with interest at the rate of eight-pence per month,

during the time he shall have allowed the loan to remain unpaid. Should Mr. de Montague not redeem his pledge before the specified period of twelve months is completed, then it is competent for My Uncle (after a further delay of three months) to sell the pledge by public auction, and to abstract from the proceeds, the principal and interest; but, supposing the amount realised by such sale, to be greater than the principal and interest, then it is in the power of Mr. de Montague to demand the balance from My Uncle. Should, on the other hand, Mr. de Montague's watch and ap-

pendages fetch less than the principal and interest, My Uncle must abide by the loss.

This transaction is the model of every other in which My Uncle engages. It is essentially a banking transaction. The deposit branch of his establishments, instead of receiving money on customers' account, takes in property: the issue department is solely conducted by means of specie. My Uncle's bills are, as I have said, merely deposit notes, redeemable within twelve months after date. What the Bank of England is to Her Majesty's Government; what Smith Payne, and Jones Lloyd, are to the City magnates; what Coutts and Com-

pany, and Drummonds, are to the nobility and gentry of Westminster; that My Uncle is to the Montagues, the artisans, the labourers, and the poor of London and the suburbs generally. It is not difficult to illustrate the working of this kind of banking transaction by numerous examples, similar to that already furnished by Mr. de Montague. Take the case of Phelim O'Shea, brick-layer's labourer. A wet week or a defaulting brick-maker has thrown Phelim O'Shea temporarily out of employment, and his stock of cash is inadequate to meet his current expenses. Yet, although without money, he is not without means. He has a coat — a loose blue coat, long in the cuffs, with a swallow-tail, and brass-buttons rubbed black in the centre. He converts that coat into a bank deposit, and My Uncle advances him a sum of money, which enables him to meet contingent demands, until fine weather or plenty of bricks shall set him up again. In like manner, Mrs. Lavers, the char-woman, is short of shillings; but she has a fender; so, her neighbour the washer-woman, has no money at all, but is, thanks to My Uncle, a capitalist while she possesses a flat-iron. Biddle, the boot-closer, has been rather idle during the early part of the week, and is proportionately pressed for time at the end of it. He works as hard as he can all Saturday, yet he has finished his job only in time to be too late to take it home; for at nine his em-

ployer's premises are closed. Money he must have; so he takes some of the boots to My Uncle; and, on Monday, redeems them with the money he has been paid for the rest of them. The operation by which money is raised upon the coat, the fender, the flat-iron, or the new boots, is usually described as "pawnbroking;" and My Uncle is (not to mince the matter) called a Pawnbroker.

My Uncle's office — or we can afford to say, shop, for My Uncle has not the least desire to sink it — in a poor neighbourhood, is a remarkable scene. It is particularly so, on a Saturday night. The reader who should trudge with me, following the Eastern index of the church weathercocks, to My Uncle's in the region of the Commercial Road, on a Saturday night, would find another sort of interest going on there, besides the interest My Uncle is empowered by law to take. He (for the reader is of an arbitrary gender, according to the cases wisely cited in the old school grammar, where it instanced, "as we say of the sun, he is setting; or of a ship, she sails well") — he would find My Uncle's full of company. He would find the little private boxes in the shop, with bolts inside the doors — supposed to be designed for bashful clients, coyly emulous of solitude — crowded with miscellaneous customers; the public portion of the shop no less so. He would find three-fourths of

these attendants on My Uncle to be nieces — women — prolific in children, to judge from the babies present, and from other powerful symptoms. Enquiring of My Uncle of what class these mostly were, he would be answered, "Wives of labourers in the Docks." Hereupon his thoughts would probably go wandering down long ranges of warehouses, and wharves, and cellarage, working at windlasses and cranes, at logs of wood, at bales, at sacks, at casks, at rum and sugar, until brought back to My Uncle's by a Plump! close to him as he stood behind the counter, and the tumbling out of the wall of half-a-dozen bundles. Then, remembering that popular figure of speech, The Spout, he would enquire of My Uncle whether those bundles had been up the Spout, and were now coming down? To which My Uncle, with a forbearing smile, as one who could not expect him to be otherwise than innocent of the proprieties of the trade, would mildly make reply, "It is called the Spout, but *we* call it the Well."

Then, his eye would follow the bundles from the Spout to the counter, admiring to see how they were whisked away, and tossed intuitively, label upwards, by brisk jugglers of shopmen. "Now then, Flathers!" "Here!" "How many, Mrs. Flathers?" "Six." "Only three down yet." (Those three would be laid aside, and Mrs. Flathers would resign herself to more waiting.) "Bailey, how many?" "One." A rapid pen-

and-ink sum would be worked by the shopman on the back of the ticket. "Eighteen - pence half-penny." Bailey would know it well beforehand — would have the exact amount ready — would depart with a bald infant son in arms (one red sock missing), and make room for Dennet.

Dennet, slatternly and aged seventeen, would produce a gown. The shopman, opening it with sleight of hand, would know it at a glance. "A shilling." "Eighteen-pence." "Can't be." "Say one and three." "Impossible." Gown slapped, thrown up, tossed over — wrapped and pinned as tight as a ship's block! Ticket and duplicate made out, sixpence and halfpence jerked from the till like water. All right! "Now Mrs. Jolly, what are *you* waiting for?" "My husband's rule. I think it's behind you, Charles. Do give it me, that's a good soul, and let me go, for I've got marketing to do, and supper besides!" — "This it?" — "That's it, Charles!" Another rapid calculation. "Eighteen-pence three farthings." Change for a shilling at a blow. Mrs. Jolly gone, and somebody come into the genteeler portion of the shop, supposed to be set aside for purchasers of articles exposed for sale. — "About that table-cloth this morning." "Oh!"

Then, My Uncle in person would present himself, and confront a middle-aged matron of respectable appearance, accompanied by a poor-looking girl, half servant-girl, and half com-

panion. "This," My Uncle would say, pointing to the latter and addressing the former, "is the young woman who offered a very long table-cloth in pledge this morning," — which My Uncle would produce whilst speaking, "Yes Sir," the respectable looking woman would reply. "This is the young person. And it is my property." — "She said," My Uncle would quietly proceed, "that it was her sister's property, and that her sister sent her." — "Yes Sir, it is quite correct, she did." — "Well! but you know," My Uncle would retort, glancing confidentially at the two, "you are *not* her sister?" "No Sir, I am not; I confess I am not. But a person don't wish to mention the exact truth when reduced to these necessities, and such was the instructions that I giv' her. I am aware that it is not, strictly speaking, right fur to pervert the truth, and I am sorry for it now, since it has caused me a deal of trouble, and forced me to come a good distance." — "I am sorry too, both to have stopped the table-cloth, and to have put you to any inconvenience," My Uncle would return, "but we are obliged to be cautious. Her account was not satisfactory, though not so unsatisfactory as to justify me in detaining her — and it's such a very long table-cloth! It might be a ship's table-cloth, for instance, not honestly come by, especially as the marking in the corner was illegible!" "So it might Sir, and I don't complain." — "Besides,"

My Uncle would proceed, "it's too long a table-cloth, for any table that *you* have in your house, you know?" "Certainly it is Sir, but I used to keep a public-house. I kept the Fox and Grapes at Bow, for several years, and that table-cloth was used in the business." Then, My Uncle, reassured by his ears, as well as by his eyes, would roll it up, and say that he was glad to lend the matron the money that she wanted "on it;" and the affair would be completed to the satisfaction of all parties.

The reader of the arbitrary gender would observe, perhaps, as the matron and the servant left the shop, another matron enter by the same genteel door, accompanied, to his thinking (though, of course, he is anything but suspicious) by a doubtful-looking little Niece, of thirteen years or so — doubtful as a Niece, because of her very strong resemblance to her Aunt. A plump little, comfortable, pippin-cheeked Aunt, mighty soft-spoken, and wrapped-up to her chubby chin in reputable furs. He would observe them come in, with a mincing pretence of inquiring on what terms the purchase of a great coat near the door could be effected — so, gradually, and without abatement of gentility, approach the counter, and slide into a shopman's hand (the immediate link of communication between Aunt and Shopman, being Niece) two duplicates for silver spoons. To the inquiry, "Do you wish to take 'em out?" he would observe Aunt's neck

bend, swan-like, in the affirmative, while Niece as the more artless spirit, said openly, "Please!" The strangeness of Aunt in such a place; her timid surprise, repressed by a continual effort; the expressive appeal of her gentility to the chivalrous feelings of the shopman; the mysterious gathering of her furs about her chin; the delicate way in which, when Niece has the spoons all safe, Aunt bends forward, to say in a fluttered whisper, as she draws her glove upon her short plump hand, "that there is a fish-slice which she will probably require to redeem on Monday, and will the forenoon be a good time for coming unobserved?" would not be lost upon him. But it is a thousand to one that he would be amused by this elaboration, because perfectly convinced that Aunt and Niece are quite as intimate with My Uncle as Mrs. Flathers herself is — just then going out, with her six bundles.

In Mrs. Flathers and the general customers, he would find no pretence of shyness, either with My Uncle or with one another. In the intervals of not ungracious expostulations with "Charles" or "William," to "see if that shawl's down yet!" they would gossip about their husbands, and their families, and Mrs. Walker's having come better through it than they had thought she would, after Walker's treatment of her — as they might at any other place of assemblage. Their children, too:

whether so young as to be taking their regular meals at My Uncle's, or to be staring at the gas and sucking their fists: or so old as to be stood down in corners to poke their fingers into one another's eyes: would be found quite at home. Of little old men and women of an older growth yet, very knowing, and very observant of all the business done, there would be no want. Men would be found (especially married men) a little out of place — rather awkward and shy — something hustled by the women — and sensible of its being better to leave such ordinary domestic affairs as pawnbroking to them. Girls from ten to fifteen would be seen highly to cherish this privilege, and to fly at boys of corresponding years like tigresses.

The transactions to be contemplated at My Uncle's on such an occasion would be of a singular and various nature. This woman would be "taking out" a sheet and a child's petticoat, pawned in the morning of that very day — most likely to provide her husband's dinner. That man would be redeeming a saw, which has been in my Uncle's keeping, hundreds of times — which is constantly passing in and out of his possession. And this, not because the man is a drunkard or an idler, but because he is a poor jobbing carpenter, without a penny of monied capital: who, when he has a small job in hand, and has done the sawing part of it and wants the nails and glue to finish it,

pawns the saw to provide them, until he is paid and can redeem it. Endless cases of this kind the reader would encounter. But he would see no pawning of "The Society's Bibles," which My Uncle refuses to receive, as possessions the poor do not usually acquire on terms that involve a right to dispose of them for money; and he would see no drunkenness — for My Uncle flatly refuses to deal with men or women in a state of intoxication.

We would then survey My Uncle's stores of pledges upstairs, binned exactly like wine, and kept with as much order. Giving him a lamp in a lantern, as a necessary precaution against fire, and carrying one myself, I would show him floor above floor of these store-rooms; "the well" communicating with each; and a boy, with another lantern and sundry duplicates, going about, searching for the bundles to which the latter refer. He should see how the seven shilling coats are all binned together in order of date; how the ten shilling coats are all binned together; the fifteen shilling coats, the pound coats. So with the shawls, so with the gowns, so with the petticoats, so with the trousers, so with the shirts, so with the waistcoats. And he should witness the surprising facility with which My Uncle can find in his great stock the least article that he wants. As to miscellaneous pledges, he should see plenty of them, although in a poor neighbourhood,

common wearing apparel is the staple pawn. He should see some (but not many) beds, plenty of spades and flat-irons, alleys of clocks. He should roam among China figures, landscapes, fire-arms, fire-irons, portraits, mathematical instruments, instruments of navigation, boots, shoes, umbrellas, fenders, fishing-rods, saddles and bridles, fiddles, books, key-bugles, and hearth-rugs.

Finally, he should come downstairs again, and have a talk with My Uncle. Then he should learn how poor people, in buying articles of sale from that part of My Uncle's mansion in which such things are displayed, habitually ask what such a thing would fetch if it were offered in pawn; and frequently confess that they are influenced in their choice by their "handiness" in that regard. How this strange forethought is conspicuous in costermongers and fishwomen; the former often wearing great squab brooches as convenient pledges, and the latter massive silver rings.

Also, what wonderful things are offered in pawn. How a child's caul is frequently offered. How Bank of England notes are often pawned for security's sake; especially by hop-pickers, who have no settled home. How gamblers have a superstitious idea that pawnbrokers' money is lucky, and therefore pawn bank-notes in order to get pawnbrokers' cash to play with. How a thousand pound note was once pawned by

a gambler at a shop near Charing Cross.

Further. How a German nobleman took to a pawnbroker at the West End of London, only three years ago, his wife's patent of Spanish nobility. How the whole stock of an apothecary's shop, including pills, perfumery, draughts, bottles, ointments, counters, desks, pestles, mortars, scales, and infinitesimal weights, was once pawned, and remained unredeemed for two years; when it was taken out to be started in business in a fashionable neighbourhood. How there have been included among pawnbrokers' pledges such extraordinary articles as an immense dancing booth, well known at fairs and races; live parrots; several hundred-weight of human hair; a travelling carriage complete; a horse and chaise; and some twelve thousand pounds worth (from one place in one year) of manufactured silk. How a thousand pounds was not long since lent on Manchester goods, which it took My Uncle and assistants four days to examine. But most of these loans were not strictly pawnbroking transactions; being beyond the limits set by the pawnbroking Act of Parliament, and being effected under private agreement.

Likewise, how My Uncle, besides the ordinary risks of his calling, occasionally suffers from mistakes, not of his own commission, as in the following case. One Saturday night, a clergyman of the Church of England having

been dining with a friend (which phrase we use in a perfectly innocent and literal sense), found himself walking home in a heavy rain with no money in his pocket, and no one at his chambers of whom to borrow any when he got home. In this difficulty, he stepped into My Uncle's, and there deposited his great coat. About a month afterwards, he called to redeem it; but, on its being produced, most positively denied that that coat was his. Being a gentleman of undoubted respectability, his assurance was readily believed; some unaccountable mistake was supposed to have arisen at My Uncle's, and he received a full and proper compensation for his loss. Within a short time afterwards, two gentlemen called upon My Uncle, to remind him of the circumstance, to repay the money, and to inform him that it had since transpired, that the clergyman (then dead) had taken from his friend's house a coat that was not his own, and had never discovered his error.

My Uncle's business is by no means confined to the poorer classes. To support our third proposition concerning him — namely, that he has had greatness thrust upon him — it is only necessary to mention that he is in the ordinary habit of dealing with the upper classes of society. Such transactions are not so numerous as his dealings with the humbler orders, but they involve nearly as much capital. Neither are they so profitable; because, for every

loan above two guineas, the charge for interest is only three pence per month; and the pressure of pecuniary circumstances does not drive the better class of borrowers to pledge and redeem so frequently as the poorer; and thus to pay interest upon short terms. My Uncle numbers amongst his more aristocratic customers, barristers, clergymen, baronets, noblemen (he has *some* peers on his books), editors, wholesale-warehousemen, painters, and musicians. He confesses that the most business is brought to him by the last-mentioned classes — except small manufacturers, shopkeepers, and Irish members of Parliament; who are even better customers. Contrary to popular prejudice, My Uncle flourishes when trade is brisk and times are prosperous; for then, people not in a very large way of business, yet giving credit, have most need of ready-money capital.

My Uncle is an active and skilful tradesman, who conducts the details of business, and keeps his books, on quite a model system. There is a prejudice against him; and his calling may (as other callings may, incidentally) furnish the reckless and dissipated with means of carrying on their career. But, no social system can be framed with an exclusive reference to its dregs; and it is a fair question whether My Uncle be not, to some striving people, a real convenience and an absolute necessity. Those who have plenty of money, abundance of credit,

or as much discount as they want, will probably say, No. But they may not be qualified to sit upon the Jury.

There is a popular idea that My Uncle grinds the faces of the poor. It is indisputable, however, that his business is placed under very stringent restrictions; that it requires him to do a great deal for a half-penny; and that it does not return greater profits than many other trades. It used to be supposed that My Uncle lent too little on the pledges he received; but he can have no motive for so doing, as he speculates on the receipt of interest: and the more principal he can safely lend, the more interest he hopes to gain. Moreover, there is individual competition in his business, as in all other businesses.

There is only one Quaker in My Uncle's family. With this last scrap of the history of his race, I present My Uncle to your consideration.

A CURIOUS PAGE OF FAMILY HISTORY.

THE Chambellans were an old Yorkshire family, which once had held a high place amongst the landed gentry of the county. A knight of that family had been a Crusader in the army of Richard Cœur de Lion; and now he lay, with all his insignia about him, in the parish church, whilst others of his race reposed in the same chancel, under monuments and

brasses, which spoke of their name and fame during their generation. In the lapse of time the family had become impoverished, and gradually merged into the class of yeomen, retaining only a remnant of the broad lands which had once belonged to them. In 1744-5, the elder branch of the family, consisting of the father, two sons, and a daughter, resided at what had once been the mansion-house. It had been built originally in the reign of Stephen, and was a curious specimen of different kinds of architecture, bearing traces of its gradual transformation from the stronghold of the days when it was no metaphor to say that every man's house was his castle, down to the more peaceful dwelling of lawful and orderly times. It had now become little more than a better sort of farm-house. What had been the tilt-yard was filled with a row of comfortable barns, cart-sheds, and hay-stacks: a low wall of rough grey stones enclosed a small garden: a narrow gravel walk, edged on each side with currant-trees and gooseberry-bushes, led up to the fine old porch, embowered in the ivy and creepers which covered nearly the whole of the building with its luxuriant growth. The old gateway at the entrance of the yard was still surmounted with the "coat armour" of the family, carved in stone; but the gates themselves had long ago disappeared, and been replaced by a common wooden farm-yard gate. The "coat armour" itself was

covered with moss, and a fine crop of grass and house-leek grew among the stones of the walls, to which it would have communicated a desolate appearance, if the farm-yard arrangements had been less orderly.

Halsted Hall, as it was called, was six miles from the city of York, and stood about a mile from the main road. The only approach to it was by a long rough lane, so much cut up by the carts and cattle that it was almost impassable to foot-passengers, except in the height of summer or depth of winter, when the mud had been dried up by the sun or the frost.

The father and brothers attended the different fairs and markets in the ordinary course of business; their sister, Mary Chamberlan, managed the affairs of the house and dairy. She led a very secluded life, for they had no neighbours, and of general society there was none nearer than the city itself. Mary, however, had plenty of occupation, and was quite contented with her lot. She was nearly seventeen, tall, well-formed, and with an air of composed dignity which suited well with her position, which was of great responsibility for so young a person. Her mother, who had been dead rather more than a year, had been a woman of superior education and strong character. To her, Mary owed all the instruction she had ever received, and the tinge of refinement which made her manners

very superior to those of either her father or brothers. She, however, was quite unconscious of this, and they all lived very happily together in the old out-of-the-way place.

It happened that, in the spring of 1745, an uncle of her mother's, who resided at York, was about to celebrate the marriage of one of his daughters; Mary Chambellan, with her father and brothers, were invited to the festivities. The father would have sent an excuse for himself and Mary; he was getting old, and did not like to be put out of his usual ways. The brothers, however, pleaded earnestly that their sister might have a little recreation. Finally consent was obtained, and she went with her brothers.

It was a very fine wedding, and a ball and supper finished the rejoicings. Some of the officers, quartered with their regiments in York, were invited to this ball. Amongst others was a certain Captain Henry Pollexfen. He was a young man of good family in the south of England, heir to a large fortune; and extremely handsome and attractive on his own account, independent of these advantages.

He was, by all accounts, a type of the fine high-spirited young fellow of those days; good-tempered, generous, and overflowing with wild animal life and spirits, which he threw off in a thousand impetuous extravagances. He could dance all night at a ball, ride a dozen miles to meet the

hounds the following morning, and, after a hard day's sport, sit down to a deep carouse, and be as fresh and gay after it as if he had been following the precepts of Lewis Cornaro. The women contended with each other to attract his attentions; but although he was devoted to every woman he came near, and responded to their universal good-will by flirting indefatigably, his attentions were so indiscriminate, that there was not one belle who could flatter herself that she had secured him for her "humble servant," — as lovers were then wont to style themselves. Mary Chambellan was not, certainly, the belle of the wedding ball-room, and by no means equal in fortune or social position to most of the women present; but whether from perverseness, or caprice, or love of novelty, Henry Pollexfen was attracted by her, and devoted himself to her exclusively.

The next York Assembly was to take place in a few days; and this young man, who did not know what contradiction meant, made Mary promise to be his partner there. Old Mr. Chambellan, however, who thought his daughter had been away from home quite long enough, fetched her back himself on the following day; and Mary would as soon have dared to ask to go to the moon as to remain to go to the assembly. Henry Pollexfen was extremely disappointed when he found that Miss Chambellan had returned home; but he was too much caressed and sought

after to be able to think long about the matter, and so his sudden fancy soon passed away.

In the autumn of the same year he met one of her brothers in the hunting field. Accident threw them together towards the close of a hard day's run; when, in clearing a stone fence, some loose stones were dislodged, and struck Captain Pollexfen's horse, laming him severely. Night was coming on; it was impossible to return to his quarters on foot; and young Chambellan invited his fellow-sportsman to go home with him — Halsted Hall being the nearest habitation. The invitation was accepted. Although old Mr. Chambellan would as soon have opened his doors to a dragon; yet even he could find no fault under the circumstances, and was constrained to welcome their dangerous guest with old-fashioned hospitality. He soon became so charmed with his visitor, that he invited him to return, and the visitor gladly did so.

His almost forgotten admiration for Mary revived in full force the moment he saw her again. He soon fell desperately and seriously in love with her. Mary's strong and gentle character assumed great influence over his mercurial and impetuous disposition. That she became deeply attached to him, was nothing wonderful; she could scarcely have helped it, even if he had not sought to win her affections.

In a short time, he made proposals of marriage for her to her

father, who willingly consented, feeling, if the truth must be told, very much flattered at the prospect of such a son-in-law.

Henry Pollexfen then wrote a dutiful letter to his own father, telling him how much he was in love, and how earnestly he desired permission to follow his inclinations. Old Mr. Pollexfen had, like many other fathers, set his heart upon his son's making a brilliant match; and although, after consulting the "History of Yorkshire," where he found honourable mention made of the Chambellan family, he could offer no objection on the score of birth; yet he thought his son might do better. He was too wise to make any direct opposition; on the contrary, he gave his conditional consent, only stipulating for time. He required that twelve months should elapse before the marriage took place, when his son would be little more than two-and-twenty, whilst Mary would be not quite nineteen. He wrote paternal letters to Mary and polite epistles to her father. He even applied at head-quarters for leave of absence for his son; whom he immediately summoned up to London, where his own duties, as Member of Parliament, would detain him for some time.

Under any other circumstances, Captain Pollexfen would have been delighted with this arrangement; but, as it was, he would infinitely have preferred being allowed to marry Mary at once. However, there was no help for it. Old Mr. Chambellan, himself,

urged the duty of immediate obedience to his father's summons, and Pollexfen departed.

For many weeks his letters were as frequent as the post would carry them. He was very miserable under the separation; and, much as she loved him, Mary could not wish him to be otherwise. His regiment was suddenly ordered abroad; the necessary hurry of preparation, and the order to join his detachment at Canterbury without delay, rendered it quite impossible for Captain Pollexfen to see Mary before his departure. He wrote her a tender farewell, sent her his picture, and exhorted her to write frequently, and never to forget him for an instant: promising, of course, everlasting constancy for himself.

There was little chance that Mary should forget him, in that old lonely house, without either friends or neighbours. Besides, the possibility of ceasing to love her affianced husband never occurred to her. With Captain Pollexfen it was different. Under no circumstances was his a character that would bear absence unchanged; and the distraction of foreign scenes, and the excitement of his profession, soon banished the image of Mary from his mind. At length he felt it a great bore that he was engaged to be married. The regiment remained sixteen months absent, and he heartily hoped that she would have forgotten him.

Mary's father died shortly after

her lover's departure; the family property descended to her brothers, and she was left entirely dependent upon them. Captain Pollexfen's letters had entirely ceased; Mary had received no communication for more than six months, when she saw the return of his regiment announced, and his name gazetted as colonel. He, however, neither came to see her, nor wrote to her, and Mary became seriously ill. She could no longer conceal her sufferings from her brothers. Under the impression that she was actually dying, they wrote to her lover, demanding the cause of his silence, and telling him of her situation. Colonel Pollexfen was conscience-stricken by this letter. He declared to the brothers that he intended to act as became a man of honour, and wrote to Mary with something of his old affection, revived by remorse: excusing his past silence, begging forgiveness, and promising to go down to see her, the instant he could obtain leave of absence.

Under the influence of this letter Mary revived; but the impression made upon her future husband soon passed away—he daily felt less inclination to perform his promise. He was living in the midst of fashionable society, and was more courted than ever, since by the death of his father he had come into possession of his fortune. He began to feel that he had decidedly thrown himself away; and by a most unnatural transition, he hated Mary for her claims upon him,

and considered himself a very ill-used victim.

Mary's brothers finding that Colonel Pollexfen did not follow his letter, nor show any signs of fulfilling his engagement, would not submit to any more trifling. The elder made a journey to London, and demanded satisfaction, with the intimation that the younger brother would claim the same right when the first affair was terminated.

Colonel Pollexfen was not, of course, afraid of having even two duels on his hands at once; he had already proved his courage too well to allow a suspicion of that sort. His answer was characteristic. He told young Chambellan that he was quite ready to meet both him and his brother, but that he was under a previous engagement to marry their sister, which he wished to perform first, as otherwise circumstances might occur to prevent it; he should then be quite at their service, as it was his intention to quit his bride at the church door, and never to see her again!

The brothers, looking upon this as a pretext to evade the marriage altogether, resolved, after some deliberation, to accept his proposal. They had great difficulty in prevailing upon their sister to agree to their wishes; but they none of them seriously believed that he would carry out his threat, and Mary fancied that all danger of a duel would be evaded. A very liberal settlement was drawn up by Colonel Pollexfen's direction,

which he signed and sent down to the bride's family. On the day appointed, Mary and her brothers repaired to the church; a travelling chariot and four horses stood at the door. On entering, they found Colonel Pollexfen pointing out to the friend who accompanied him the monuments belonging to the Chambellan family. As soon as he perceived them he took his place at the altar, and the ceremony commenced without delay. As soon as it was concluded, he bowed with great politeness to all present, and said, "You are all here witnesses that I have performed my engagement!" Then, without even looking at his bride, he quitted the church, and, accompanied by his friend, entered the carriage which was in waiting, and drove rapidly away! Mary was carried senseless from the church, and for several weeks continued dangerously ill.

The real strength of her character now showed itself. She made no complaint; she did not even assume her husband's name, but took the appellation of Mrs. Chambellan. The settlement was returned to Colonel Pollexfen's lawyer, with an intimation that it would never be claimed. She still-ed the anger of her brothers, and would not endure a word to be said against her husband. She never alluded to him herself. A great change came over her; she did not seem to suffer nearly so much from her cruel position as might have been expected; her melancholy and depression gave

place to a steady determination of purpose. In the brief space during which she and her husband had stood before the altar, she had realised the distance that existed between their positions in life. With a rare superiority, she understood how natural it was that he should have felt no desire to fulfil his boyish engagement; she owned in her heart that she was not fitted to be the wife and companion of such a man as he had now become. Had she seen all this sooner, she would have at once released him; now she could no longer do so, and she resolved to fit herself to fill the station to which, as his wife, she had been raised.

The brief interview before the altar had stimulated to desperation her attachment to him: and she felt that she must win him back or die. Mary had received very little education. In those days the instruction bestowed on most women was very limited; but Mary fancied that all gentlewomen, who moved in society, were well informed; and her first step was to obtain some elementary books from the master of a boys' school at York, and begin, with undoubting simplicity, to learn history and geography, and all the things which she supposed every lady of her husband's acquaintance knew. A thirst for information was soon aroused in her; she had few advantages and very little assistance; but her energy and perseverance surmounted all obstacles, and she found a present reward in her labour. Her life ceased to seem

either lonely or monotonous. Still, the spirit that worked within her was far more precious than any actual result she obtained. She had a noble object in view; and, unconsciously to herself, it purified her heart from all bitterness, or wounded vanity, or impatience. A great sorrow nobly borne, is a great dignity. The very insult which had seemed to condemn her to a wasted existence, was transformed into a source of life and fruitfulness, by the wise humility with which she accepted it.

Ten years passed thus, and in the matured woman of thirty, few could have recognised the forsaken girl of nineteen. But the present only fulfilled the promise which was then latent in her character.

All this time, her husband had endeavoured to forget that he was married. Shortly after the ceremony, he went abroad with his regiment; and after some time spent in active service, he returned to England, and quitted the army with the brevet rank of General. He resided partly in London and partly in Bath, leading the usual life of a man of fashion in those days, and making himself remarkable for his brilliant extravagances.

About that time a young and beautiful actress appeared, who speedily became the object of adoration to all the young men of fashion about town.

General Pollexfen was one of her lovers, and carried her off one night from the theatre, when

she came off the stage between the acts. He allowed her to assume his name, and lavished a fortune upon her caprices; although her extravagance and propensity to gambling involved him in debt.

Ten years had thus passed, when the cousin, whose marriage was mentioned at the beginning of this story, was ordered to Bath by her physician. She entreated Mary to accompany her, who, after some persuasion, consented. It was a formidable journey in those days, and they were to stay some months. They found a pleasant lodging. Mary, with some reluctance, was drawn into society, and occasionally accompanied her cousin to the Assemblies, which were then in high vogue.

General Pollexfen was absent from Bath when his wife arrived there. He had been called up to London by some lawyer's business, and calculated upon being absent three weeks.

It so chanced, however, that the business was concluded sooner than he expected, and that he returned to Bath without announcing his coming. He went at once to the Assembly, and was walking through the rooms in a chafed and irritable mood (having that night discovered the treachery of the beautiful actress, which had long been known to everybody else), when a voice struck his ear which caused him to turn suddenly. He saw, near at hand, a dignified and beautiful woman, who reminded him of some one he had seen before. She turned away on

perceiving him — it was Mary. She had recognised her husband, and, scarcely able to stand, she took the arm of her cousin, and reached the nearest seat. Her husband, forgetting everything else in his impatience to learn who it was who had thus startled vague recollections, went hastily up to the Master of the Ceremonies, and desired to be introduced to — his own wife!

By some fatality, the Master of the Ceremonies blundered, and gave the name of Mary's cousin. This mistake gave Mary courage; for years she had dreamed of such a meeting, and the fear of losing the opportunity nerved her to profit by it. She exerted herself to please him. He had been rudely disenchanted from the graces of fine ladies, and was in a humour to appreciate the gentle home influence of Mary's manners; he was enchanted with her, and begged to be allowed to follow up the acquaintance, and to wait upon her the next morning. Permission was of course given, and he handed Mary and her cousin to their chairs.

Mary was cruelly agitated; she had not suffered so much during the ten preceding years; the suspense and anxiety were too terrible to endure; it seemed as though morning would never come. Her husband was not much more to be envied. He had discovered that she resembled the woman he had once so much loved, and then so cruelly hated — whom he married, and deserted;

but though tormented by a thousand fancied resemblances, he scarcely dared to hope that it could be she. The next day, long before the lawful hour for paying morning visits, he was before her door, and obtained admittance. The resemblance by day-light was more striking than it had been on the previous evening; and Mary's agitation was equal to his own. His impetuous appeal was answered. Overwhelmed with shame and repentance, and at the same time happy beyond expression, General Pollexfen passionately entreated his wife's forgiveness. Mary not only won back her husband, but regained, with a thousandfold intensity, the love which had once been hers — regained it, never to lose it more!

The story soon became known, and created an immense sensation. They quitted Bath and retired to her husband's family seat in Cornwall, where they continued chiefly to reside. They had one son, an only child, who died when he was about fifteen. It was an overwhelming affliction, and was the one mortal shadow on their happiness. They died within a few weeks of each other; their honours and estates passing to a distant branch of the family.

FAMILIAR THINGS.

THERE is a truth that travel brings,
A truth of homely birth;
We dwell among familiar things,
And little know their worth.

The emigrant in distant lands,
The sailor on the sea,
For all that, round us, silent stands,
Have deeper hearts than we.

We dwell among familiar things;
And daily, with dull sight,
We touch a thousand secret springs
Of sorrow and delight:
Delight and reverential bliss
To those who, exiled far,
Stretch dreaming arms to clasp and kiss
Each little household star.

We dwell among familiar things;
We know them by their use;
And, by their many minist'rings,
Their value we deduce:
Forgetful each has had an eye,
And each can speak, though dumb;
And, of the ghostly days gone by,
Strange witness might become.

We dwell among familiar things;
But should it be our lot
To sever all the binding-strings
That form the household knot;
To wander upon alien mould,
And cross the restless foam; —
How clearly should we then behold
The Deities of Home!

JACK ALIVE IN LONDON.

COMING from Greenwich or Blackwall, radiant with "Badminton," or "Cider cup;" or, perchance, coming home very satiated and sea-sick from foreign parts, tired, jaded, used-up, as a man is apt to be under such circumstances, the Pool always pleases, enlivens, interests me. I pull out the trumpet-stop of my organ of veneration; my form dilates with the tall spars around me; I lose all count of the wonders of the lands I have seen, of the coming cares and troubles — the worrying and bickering — awaiting

me, perhaps, in that remorseless, inevitable London yonder. I forget them all in the Pool. If I have a foreigner with me, so much the better. "Not in crimson-trousered soldiery," I cry, "oh! Louis or Alphonse — not in the constant shouldering of arms, and the drumming that never ceases, — not in orders of the day, or vexatious passports, are the glories of Britain inscribed. See them in that interminable forest of masts, the red sunlighting up the cupolas of Greenwich, the tarry hulls, the patched sails, the laden hay-boats, the trim wherries, the inky waters of the Pool. Read them in the cobweb rigging; watch them curling from the short pipes of red-capped mariners lounging on the bulwarks of timber ships! Ships upon ships, masts everywhere, even in the far-off country, among trees and churches; the commerce of the world jammed up between these cumbered wharves, and overflowing into these narrow creeks!"

I propose to treat, as shortly as I can consistently with accuracy, of maritime London, and of "Jack" (alluding, under that cognomen, to the general "seafaring" class) alive in London.

"Jack" is "alive," to my knowledge and experience, in East Smithfield, and in and about all the Docks; in Poplar, Limehouse, Rotherhithe, Shadwell, Wapping, Bermondsey, and the Island of Dogs. He is feebly alive in Fenchurch Street and the Minories; but he shows special

and vigorous symptoms of vitality in Ratcliffe Highway. If it interest you at all to see him alive, and to see how he lives, we will explore, for some half-hour or so, this very muddy, tarry, salt-water smelling, portion of the metropolis.

You can get to Ratcliffe Highway through the Minories; you may attain it by a devious route through Whitechapel and Mile End New Town; but the way I go, is from London Bridge, down Thames Street, and through the Tower, in order to come gradually upon Jack alive, and to pick up specimens of his saline existence bit by bit.

London Bridge is densely crowded, as it has been, is, and always will be, I suppose. The wheels of the heavy waggons, laden with bales and barrels, creak and moan piteously; while the passengers, who are always certain of being too late (and never are) for a train on the South-Eastern Railway, goad cabmen into performing frantic *pas de deux* with their bewildered horses. The sportive bullocks, too, the gigs, knackers' carts, sheep, pigs, Barclay's drays, and cohorts of foot-passengers, enliven the crowded scene.

Comfortably corn-crushed, jostled, and dust-blinded, I descend the flight of stairs on the right of the King William Street side of the bridge. I have but to follow my nose along Thames Street to Ratcliffe; and I follow it. I elbow my way through a compact mass

of labourers, porters, sailors, fishwomen, and spruce clerks, with their bill books secured by a leather-covered chain round their waists. Room there, for a hot sugar-broker tearing by, towards the Exchange, bursting with a recent bargain! Room for a spruce captain (he had his boots cleaned by one of the "brigade" opposite Billingsgate market) in an irreproachable state of clean-shirtedness, navy-blue-broad-clothedness and chimney-pot-hattedness! He sets his big silver watch at every church, and dusts his boots with an undoubted bandanna. He has an appointment, doubtless, at Garraway's or the Jerusalem Coffee House, with his owner or broker.

A gush of fish, stale and fresh, stretches across Thames Street as I near Billingsgate market. I turn aside for a moment, and enter the market. Business is over; and the male and female purveyors of the treasures of the deep solace themselves with pipes and jovial converse.

Jack is getting more lively all through Thames Street and Tower Street, and is alarmingly vital when I emerge on Tower Hill. A row of foreign mariners pass me, seven abreast: swarthy, ear-ringed, black-bearded varlets in red shirts, light-blue trousers, and with sashes round their waists. Part of the crew of a Sardinian brig, probably. They have all their arms round each other's necks; yet I cannot help thinking that they look somewhat "knifey,"

"stilettoey." I hope I may be mistaken, but I am afraid that it would be odds were you to put an indefinite quantity of rum into *them*, they would put a few inches of steel into *you*.

But I enter the Tower postern, and am in another London — the military metropolis — at once. Very curious and wonderful are these old grey towers, these crumbling walls, these rotting portcullises, so close to the business-like brick-and-mortar of St. Katherine's Dock House hard by. What has the Devilin Tower, the "Scavenger's Daughter," the "Stone Kitchen," to do with wholesale grocers, ship-chandlers, and outfitting warehouses? Is there not something jarring, discordant, in that grim, four-turreted old fortalice, frowning on the quiet corn and coal-carrying vessels in the pool? What do the "thousand years of war" so close to the "thousand years of peace?" Is not the whole sombre, lowering old pile, a huge anachronism? Julius Cæsar, William the Third, and the Docks! Wharves covered with tubs of peaceful palm-oil, and dusky soldiers sauntering on narrow platforms, from whence the black mouths of honeycombed old guns grin (toothless, haply) into peaceful dwelling-houses. The dried-up moat, the old rooms, wall-inscribed with the overflowings of weary hearts; the weazen-faced old warders, with their strange, gone-by costume; the dinted armour, and rusted headman's axe; all tell — with the

vacant space on the Green, where the four posts of the scaffold stood, and the shabby little church, where lie Derwentwater and Lovat, Anne Boleyn and Northumberland, the innocent and the guilty, the dupers and the duped — of things that *have been*, thank God!

I pass a lane where the soldiers live (why should their wives necessarily be slatterns, their children dirty, and they themselves alternately in a state of shirt-sleeves, beer and tobacco, or one of pipe-clay, red blanketing, and mechanical stolidity, I wonder?) and ask an artilleryman on guard where a door of egress is to be found. He “dwoan’t know:” of course not. Soldiers never do know. It isn’t in the articles of war, or the Queen’s regulations. Still, I think my friend in the blue coat, and with the shaving-brush stuck at the top of his shako, would be rather more useful in guarding a fortress, if he knew the way into and the way out of it.

Patience, “trying back,” and the expenditure of five minutes, at last bring me out by another postern, leading on to Tower Hill the less, East Smithfield, St. Katherine’s Docks, and the Mint; very nearly opposite is a narrow street, where a four-oared cutter, in the middle of the pavement, in progress of receiving an outer coat of tar and an inner one of green paint, suggests to me that Jack is decidedly alive in this vicinity; while, closely adjacent, a monster “union jack,” sloping

from the first-floor window of an unpretending little house, announces the whereabouts of the “Royal Naval Rendezvous.” You have perhaps heard of it more frequently as the house of reception for the “Tower Tender.” The Rendezvous, and the Tender too, had a jovial season of it in the war time, when the press was hot, and civilians were converted into “volunteers” for the naval service, by rough compulsion. The neighbourhood swarmed with little “publics,” embellished with cartoons of the beatified state of Jack, when alive in the navy. Jack was continually drinking grog with the port admiral, or executing hornpipes with the first lieutenant. The only labour imposed on him (pictorially) was the slaying half-a-dozen Frenchmen occasionally before breakfast; for which a grateful country rewarded him with hecatombs of dollars. At home, he was represented frying gold watches, and lighting pipes with five pound notes. Love, liquor, and glory! King and country! Magnificent bounty, &c., &c., &c. But the picture has two sides; for Jack hung back sometimes, preferring to fry watches in the merchant service. A grateful country pressed him. He ran away from captivity; a grateful country flogged him. He mutinied; a grateful country hanged him. Whether it was the flogging, or the hanging, or the scurvy, or the French bullets, or the prisons at Verdun and Brest, I won’t be certain; but Jack be-

came at last quite a scarce article. So the Royal Naval Rendezvous, and the Tower Tender were obliged to content themselves with the sweepings of the prisons — thieves, forgers, murderers, and the like. These even grew scarce; and a grateful country pressed everybody she could lay her hands on. "Food for powder" was wanted — "mortal men" good enough to "fill a pit," *must* be had. Quiet citizens, cripples, old men were pressed. Apprentices showed their indentures, citizens their freedom, in vain. Britannia *must* have men. People would come home from China or Honolulu, and fall into the clutches of the press-gang five minutes after they had set foot on land. Bags of money would be found on posts on Tower Hill, left there by persons who had been pressed unawares. People would leave public-house parlours to see what sort of a night it was, and never be seen or heard of again. I remember, even, hearing from my nurse, during childhood, a ghostly legend of how the Lord Chancellor, going over Tower Hill one night with the great seal in a carpet-bag, and "disguised in liquor" after a dinner at Guildhall, was kidnapped by a press-gang, sent on board the Tower Tender, and not released until three months afterwards, when he was discovered on board the "Catspaw" frigate, in the Toulon fleet, scraping the mizen-mast, under the cat of a boatswain's mate. Of course I won't be an-

swerable for the veracity of the story; but we scarcely need its confirmation to find plenty of reasons to bless those glorious good old times when George the Third was king.

Times are changed with the Rendezvous now. Sailors it still craves; but good ones — A. B.s; not raffish gaol-birds and useless landmen. The A. B.s are not so plentiful, though the times *are* so peaceful. The A. B.s have heard of the "cat;" and they know what "holystoning" and "blacklisting" means. There is a stalwart A. B., I watch, reading a placard in the window of the Rendezvous, stating that the Burster, one hundred and twenty guns, fitting at Plymouth, wants some able-bodied seamen. "Catch a weasel asleep," says the A. B., walking on. He belongs to the Chutnagore, A. 1, under engagement to sail for Madras, and would rather not have anything to do with the Burster.

A weather-beaten old quarter-master stands on the steps of the Rendezvous, and eyes the A. B. wistfully. The A. B. is the sort of man Britannia wants just now. So are those three black-whiskered fellows, swaggering along with a Yankee skipper, with whom they have just signed articles for a voyage to Boston, in the Peleg Whittle; Coon, master. Poor old quarter-master! give him but his "four-and-twenty stout young fellows," his beloved press-gang; and the Chutnagore would go one A. B. short to sea; while Captain

Coon would vainly lament the loss of three of the crew of the Peleg Whittle. The Burster is very short of hands; but he has bagged very few A. B.s yet. See, a recruit offers; a lanky lad in a torn jacket, with an air of something like ragged respectability about him! He wants to "go to sea." The quarter-master laughs at him, repulses him. The boy has, ten to one, run away from school or from home, with that vague indefinite idea of "going to sea" in his mind. To sea, indeed! He has prowled about the docks, vainly importuned captains, owners, seamen, anybody, with his request. Nobody will have anything to do with him. The greatest luck in store for him would be the offer of a cabin-boy's berth on board a collier, where the captain would regale him with the convivial crowbar and the festive ropes-end, whenever the caprice seized him. Going to sea! Ah, my young friend! trudge home to Dr. Broomback's seminary—never mind the thrashing—explain to *your* young friends, impressed as you have been with a mania for "running away and going to sea," that it is one thing to talk about doing a thing, and another to do it; that a ragged little landsman is worse than useless aboard ship; and that there are ten chances to one even against his ever being allowed to put his foot on shipboard.

I leave the Royal Naval Rendezvous just as a dissolute Norwegian stops to read the Burster placard. Now, I turn past the Mint, and

past the soldiers on guard there, and pursue the course of a narrow little street leading towards the Docks.

Here, Jack leaps into great life. Ship-chandlers, ship-grocers, biscuit-bakers, sail-makers, outfitting warehouses, occupy the shops on either side. Up a little court is a nautical day-school for teaching navigation. There is a book-stall, on which lies the "Seaman's Manual," the "Ship-master's Assistant," and Hamilton Moore's "Navigation." There is a nautical instrument maker's, where chronometers, quadrants, and sextants are kept, and blank log-books are sold. The stationers display forms for manifests, bills of lading, and charter-parties. Every article vended has some connexion with those who go down to the sea in ships.

When we enter St. George's Street, where there are shops on one side of the way, and St. Katherine's Dock warehouses on the other, Jack becomes tremendously alive on the pavement. Jack from India and China, very sun-burnt, and smoking Trichinopoly cheeroots; thin cigars with a reed passed through them, and nearly a foot long. American Jack, in a red worsted shirt, and chewing indefatigably. Swedish Jack, smelling of tallow and turpentine, but amazingly good-natured, and unaffectedly polite. Italian Jack, shivering. German Jack, with a light-blue jacket and yellow trousers, stolid and smoky; Greek Jack, voluble in petticoats, and

long boots. Grimy seamen from colliers; smart, taut men, from Green's or Wigram's splendid East India ships; mates in spruce jackets, and gold-laced caps, puffing prime Havannahs. Lastly, the real unadulterated English Jack, with the inimitable roll, the unapproachable hitch, the unsurpassable flowers of language. The pancake hat stuck at the back of the head, the neckerchief passed through a wedding-ring, the flaring yellow silk handkerchief; the whole unmistakable costume and demeanour — so unlike the stage sailor, so unlike the pictorial sailor — so like only what it really is.

This is the busiest portion of the day, and the Highway is crowded. Enthusiasts would perhaps be disappointed at the woful lack of nautical vernacular prevalent with Jack. He is not continually shivering his timbers; neither is he always requesting you to stand by and belay; to drowse the lee-scuppers, or to splice the main-brace.

The doors of the public-houses disgorge great crowds of mariners; nor are there wanting taverns and eating-houses, where the sailors of different nations may be accommodated. Here is a "*Deutsches Gasthaus*," a Prussian "*Bierhalle*," a real "Norwegian House." Stay! Here we are at the Central Dock gates, and, among a crowd of sailors, hurrying in and out, swarm forth hordes of Dock labourers to their dinner.

A very queer company, in-

deed; — "navvies," seafaring men, and individuals of equivocal dress and looks, who have probably taken to the "two shillings" or half-crown a-day awarded for Dock toil, as a last refuge from inevitable starvation. Discharged policemen, ruined medical students, clerks who have lost their characters, Polish and German Refugees, might be found, I opine, in those squalid ranks. It is all equality now, however. The college-bred youth, the educated man, must toil in common with the navvy and the tramp. They seem contented enough, eating their poor meals, and puffing at the never-failing pipe with great gusto. Poor and almost destitute as these men are, they can yet obtain a species of delusive credit — a credit by which they are ultimately defrauded. Crafty victualers will advance them beer and food on the security of their daily wage, which they themselves secure from the foremen. They exact, of course, an enormous interest. It is, after all, the old abuse, the old Tommy-shop nuisance — the "infamous truck system" — the iniquitous custom of paying the labourer at the public-house, and the mechanic late on the Saturday night.

I have not time to enter the Docks just now; and plunge further into the Babel of Ratcliffe Highway. Jack is alive everywhere by this time. A class of persons remarkably lively in connection with him, are the Jews. For Jack, are these grand Jewish

outfitting warehouses alone intended. For his sole use and benefit are the swinging lamps, the hammocks and bedding, the code of signal pocket-handkerchiefs, the dreadnought coats, souwester hats, telescopes, checked shirts, pilot jackets, case bottles, and multifarious odds and ends required by the mariner. For Jack, does Meshech manufacture the delusive jewellery; while Shadrach vaunts the watch that has no works; and Abednego confidentially proposes advances of cash on wages-notes. Jewry is alive, as well as Jack, in Ratcliffe Highway. You may call that dingy little cabin of a shop, small; but, bless you! they would fit out a seventy-four in ten minutes, with everything wanted, from a spanker boom to a bottle of Harvey's Sauce. For purposes marine, they sell everything;—biscuits by sacks-full, bales of dreadnoughts, miles of rope, infinities of fishing-tackle, shaving-tackle, running-tackle, spars, sextants, sea-chests, and hundreds of other articles. Jewry will even supply you with sailors; will man vessels for you, from a cock-boat to an Indiaman. Jewry has a capital black cook inside. A third mate at two minutes' notice. A steward in the twinkling of a handspike. Topmast men in any quantity, and at immediate call.

A strange sound—half human, half ornithological—breaks on the ear above the turmoil of the crowded street. I follow a swarthy mariner, who holds a cage, muf-

fled in a handkerchief in his hand, a few yards, until he enters a large and handsome shop, kept also by a child of Israel, and which literally swarms with parrots, cockatoos, and macaws. Here they are, in every variety of gorgeous plumage and curvature of beak: with their wicked-looking, bead-like eyes and crested heads; screaming, croaking, yelling, swearing, laughing, singing, drawing corks, and winding-up clocks, with frantic energy! Most of these birds come from South America and the coast of Africa. Jack generally brings home one or two as his own private venture, selling it in London for a sum varying from thirty to forty shillings. I am sorry to have to record that a parrot which can swear well, is more remunerative to Jack than a non-juring bird. A parrot which is accomplished enough to rap out half-a-dozen round oaths in a breath, will fetch you fifty shillings, perhaps. In this shop, also, are stuffed humming-birds, ivory chessmen, strange shells, and a miscellaneous collection of those foreign odds and ends, called "curiosities." Jack is very lively here with the rabbinical ornithologist. He has just come from the Gold Coast in a man-of-war, the captain of which, in consideration of the good conduct of the crew while on the station, had permitted each man before the mast to bring as many parrots home with him as he liked. And they did bring a great many, Jack says—so many, that the vessel be-

came at last like a ship full of women; the birds creating such an astonishing variety of discordant noises, that the men were, in self-defence, obliged to let some two or three hundred of them (they didn't keep count of fifty or so) loose. Hundreds, however, came safe home; and Jack has two or three to dispose of. They whistle hornpipes beautifully. I leave him still haggling with the ornithologist, and triumphantly eliciting a miniature "Jon Bee's Vocabulary of Slang" from the largest of his birds.

You are not to suppose, gentle reader, that the population of Ratcliffe is destitute of an admixture of the fairer portion of the creation. Jack has his Jill in St. George's Street, Cable Street, Back Lane, and the Commercial Road. Jill is inclined to corpulence; if it were not libellous, I could hint a suspicion that Jill is not unaddicted to the use of spirituous liquors. Jill wears a silk handkerchief round her neck, as Jack does; like him, too, she rolls, occasionally — I believe, smokes, frequently; I am afraid, swears occasionally. Jack is a cosmopolite — here to-day, gone to-morrow; but Jill is peculiar to maritime London. She nails her colours to the mast of Ratcliffe. Jill has her good points, though she does scold a little, and fight a little, and drink a little. She is just what Mr. Thomas Dibdin has depicted her, and nothing more or less. She takes care of Jack's tobacco-box; his trousers she

washes, and his grog, too, she makes; and if he enacts occasionally the part of a maritime Giovanni, promising to walk in the Mall with Susan of Deptford, and likewise with Sal, she only upbraids him with a tear. I wish the words of all songs had as much sense and as much truth in them as Mr. Dibdin's have.

A hackney-coach (the very last hackney-coach, I verily believe, in London, and the one, moreover, which my Irish maid-of-all-work always manages to fetch me when I send her for a cab) — a hackney-coach, I say, jolts by, filled inside and out! Jack is going to be married. I don't think I am mis-stating or exaggerating the case, when I say that the whole party — bride, bridegroom, bridesmaids, bridesmen, coachman and all, are considerably the worse for liquor. Is this as it should be? Ah Poor Jack!

And I have occasion to say, "Poor Jack!" a good many times in the course of my perambulations. It is my personal opinion that Jack is robbed — that he is seduced into extravagance, hoodwinked into spendthrift and dissolute habits. There is no earthly reason why Jack should not save money out of his wages; why he should never have a watch without frying it; nor a five-pound note without lighting his pipe with it. It cannot be indispensable that he should be continually kept "alive" with gin; that he should have no companions save profligate women, no amusements save

low dancing saloons and roaring taverns. The sailor has a strong religious and moral bias. He scorns and loathes deceit, dishonesty, and injustice, innately. He is often a profligate, and a drunkard, and a swearer (I will not say blasphemer), because abominable and vicious customs make him so; because, ill cared for on board ship, he no sooner lands than he becomes the prey of the infamous harpies who infest maritime London. He is robbed by outfitters (I particularise neither Jew nor Gentile, for there are six of one and half-a-dozen of the other); he is robbed by the tavern-keepers, the crimps, and the boarding-masters. He is robbed by his associates, robbed in business, robbed in amusement. "Jack" is fair game to everybody.

The conductors of that admirable institution, the Sailors' Home, I understand, are doing their best to alleviate the evils I have lightly, but very lightly, touched upon. Jack is alive, but not with an unwholesome galvanic vitality, in the Home. He is well fed, well treated, and well cared for, generally; moreover, he is not wronged. The tailor who makes his clothes, and the landlord who sells him his beer, and the association that board him, do not conspire to rob him. The only shoal the managers of the Sailors' Home have to steer clear of, is the danger of inculcating the idea among sailors, that the institution has anything of a gratui-

tous or eleemosynary element in its construction. Sailors are high-spirited and eminently independent in feeling.

I have got by this time to the end of the straggling series of broad and narrow thoroughfares, which, under the names of East Smithfield, St. George's Street, Upper Shadwell Street, and Cock Hill, all form part, in the aggregate, of Ratcliffe Highway. I stand on the threshold of the mysterious region comprising, in its limits, Shadwell, Poplar, and Limehouse. To my left, some two miles distant, is Stepney, to which parish all children born at sea are, traditionally, said to be chargeable. No longer are there continued streets — "blocks," as the Americans call them — of houses. There are swampy fields and quaggy lanes, and queer little public-houses like ship-cuddies, transplanted bodily from East India-men, and which have taken root here. The "Cat and Fiddle" is a waterman's house — "jolly young watermen," I am afraid — no more. At the "Bear and Harp" — so the placard informs me — is held the "Master Mariners' Club." Shipbuilders' yards start suddenly upon me — ships in full sail bear down on me through quiet lanes: lofty masts loom spectrally among the quiet graves in the churchyards. In the church yonder (where the union-jack flies at the steeple), there are slabs commemorating the bequests of charitable master mariners dead years ago; of an admiral's widow, who

built an organ; of the six poor women, who are to be yearly relieved as a thankoffering for the release of some dead and gone Levant trader "from captivity among the Turkes in Algeeres." In the graveyards, scores of by-gone sea-captains, their wives and children, shipwrights, ropemakers, of the olden time, dead pursers, and ship-chandlers, sleep quietly. They have compasses and sextants, and ships in full sail, sculptured on their moss-grown tombs. The wind howls no more, nor the waves roar now for them. Gone aloft, I hope, most of them! — though Seth Slipcheese, the great ship-contractor, who sold terribly weevilly biscuit, and salted horse for beef, sleeps under that substantial brick tomb yonder: while beneath the square stone slab with the sculptured skull and hour-glass, old Martin Flibuster may have his resting-place. He was called "captain," nobody knew why; he swore terribly; he had strange foreign trinkets and gold doubloons hanging to his watch-chain, and told wild stories of parboiled Indians, and Spanish Dons, with their ears and noses slit. What matters it now, if he *did* sail with Captain Kidd, and scuttle the "Ellen and Mary," with all hands aboard? He died in his bed, and who shall say, impenitent?

The old sea-captains and traders connected with the sea, have still their abiding places in quiet cosy little cottages about here, mostly tenements, with green doors and

bow-windows, and with a summer-house perched a-top, where they can twist a flag on festive occasions, and enjoy their grog and tobacco on quiet summer evenings. The wild mania for building — the lath-and-plaster, stucco-palace, Cockney-Corinthian frenzy, has not yet extended to Limehouse, and the old "salts" have elbow-room.

I must turn back here, however; for it is nearly four o'clock, and I shall be too late else for a peep into the Docks. The Docks! What a flood of recollections bursts through the sluice-gates of my mind, as I gaze on the huge range of warehouses, the swarms of labourers, the crowd of ships! Little as many of us know of maritime London, and of the habits of Jack alive, we have all been to the Docks, once in our lives at least. Was it to see that wonderful seafaring relation of ours who was always going out to the Cape with a magnificent outfit, and who always returned, Vanderdecken-like, without having doubled it — being also minus shoes and stockings, and bringing home, as a species of atonement-offering, the backbone of a shark? Was it to dine on board the "Abercombie, Jenkinson," or I don't know how many hundred tons burden, which went out to Sydney with emigrants, and foundered in Algoa Bay? Was it with that never-to-be-forgotten tasting order for twelve pipes, sixteen hogsheads, twelve barrels, of rare ports and sherries, when coopers rushed about with candles in

cleft sticks, running gimlets into casks, and pouring out rich wines into sawdust like water? When we ate biscuits, and rinsed our mouths scientifically, and reproached our companions with being uproarious; but coming out (perfectly sober, of course), could not be prevented from addressing the populace on general subjects, and repeatedly volunteering the declaration (with our hat on the back of our head and the tie of our cravat like a bag-wig) that we were "All Right!"

I remember, as a child, always asking myself how the ships got into dock; a question rapidly followed by alarming incertitude as to how they got out. I don't think I know much more about the matter now, though I listen attentively to a pilot-coat and scarred face, who tells me all about it. Pilot-coat points to the warehouses, dilates on the enormous wells those gigantic brick-work shells contain; shows me sugar bags, coffee bags, tea chests, rice bags, tubs of tallow, casks of palm-oil. Pilot-coat has been everywhere, and every voyage has added a fresh scar to his face. He has been to sea since he was no higher than "that" — pointing to a stump. Went out in a convict ship; wrecked off St. Helena. Went out to Valparaiso; had a fever. Went out to Alexandria; had the plague. Went out to Mobile; wrecked. Went out to Jamaica; fell down the hatch-way, and broke his collar-bone. Deserted into an American liner; thence into an Austr-

lian emigrant ship; ran away at Sydney; drove bullocks in the bush; entered for Bombay; entered the Indian navy; was wrecked off the coast of Coromandel; was nearly killed with a Malay creese. Been in a South-sea whaler, a Greenland whaler, a South Shields collier, and a Shoreham mackerel boat. Who could refuse the "drop of summut" to an ancient mariner, who has such a tale to tell, were it only to curtail the exuberance of his narration? And it is, and always has been, my private opinion, that if the "wedding guest" had given the real "ancient mariner" sixpence for a "drop of summut," he would have had the pith of his story out of him in no time, whereby, though we should have lost an exquisite poem, the "wedding guest" would not have been so unsufferably bored as he undoubtedly was, and some of us would have known better, perhaps, what the story was about.

You have your choice of Docks in this wonderful maritime London. The St. Katherine's Docks, the London, the West India Docks lie close together; while, if you follow the Commercial Road, the East India Docks lie close before you, as the Commercial Docks do after going through the Thames Tunnel. There are numerous inlets, moreover, and basins, and dry docks: go where you will, the view begins or ends with the inevitable ships.

Tarry with me for a moment in the Isle of Dogs, and step on board

this huge East Indiaman. She is as big as a man-of-war, and as clean as a Dutch door-step. Such a bustle as is going on inside, and about her, nevertheless! She is under engagement to the "Honourable Company" to sail in three days' time; and her crew will have a tidy three days' work. There are horses, pigs, bullocks, being hoisted on board; there are sheep in the launch, and ducks and geese in the long-boats. French rolls can be baked on board, and a perfect kitchen-garden maintained foreward. Legions of stores are being taken on board. Mrs. Colonel Chutney's grand piano; old Mr. Mango's (of the civil service) hookahs and black servants; harness, saddlery, and sporting tackle for Lieutenant Griffin of the Bombay cavalry. And there are spruce young cadets whose means do not permit them to go by the overland rout, and steady-going civil and military servants of the Company, going out after furlough, and who do not object to a four months' sea-voyage. And there are black Ayahs, and Hookabadars, and Lascars, poor bewildered, shivering, brown-faced Orientals, staring at everything around them, as if they had not quite got over their astonishment yet at the marvels of Frangistan. I wonder whether the comparison is unfavourable to us in their Braminical minds, between the cold black swampy Isle of Dogs, the inky water, the slimy hulls, the squalid labourers, the rain and sleet; and the hot sun and yellow

sands of Calcutta; the blue water, and dark maiden, with her water-pitcher on her head; — the sacred Ganges, the rich dresses, stately elephants, half-naked Sircars of Hindostan; — the rice and arrack, the paddy fields and bungalows, the punkato, palankeen, and yellow streak of caste of Bengal the beloved! Perhaps.

Passengers are coming aboard the Indiamen, old stagers wrangling as to the security of their standing bed-places, and young ladies consigned to the Indian matrimonial market, delightfully surprised and confused at everything. The potent captain of the ship is at the Jerusalem Coffee-house, or busy with his brokers; but the mates are hard at work, bawling, commanding, and counter-commanding. Jack is alive, above, below, aloft, and in the hold, as usual, shouldering casks as though they were pint pots, and hoisting horses about manfully.

Shall we leave the Isle of Dogs, and glance at the West India Docks for a moment? Plenty to see here at all events. Rice, sugar, pepper, tobacco; decks saturated quite brown with syrup and molasses, just as the planks of a whaling ship are slippery. Jack, in a saccharine state, strongly perfumed with coffee-berries. Black Jack, very woolly-headed, and ivory-grindered, cooking, fiddling, and singing, as it seems the nature of Black Jack to cook, fiddle, and sing. Where the union-jack flies, Nigger Jack is well treated. English sailors do not

disdain to drink with him, work with him, and sing with him. Take a wherry, however, to that American clipper, with the tall masts and the tall man for skipper, and you will hear a different tale. Beneath the star-spangled banner, the allowance of halfpence for Nigger Jacks decreases wofully, while that of kicks increases in an alarming proportion. I would rather not be a black man on board an American ship.

In the London Docks we have a wonderful mixture of the ships of all nations; while on a Sunday the masts are dressed out with a very kaleidoscope of variegated ensigns. Over the ship's side lounge stunted Swedes and Danes, and oleaginous Russians, while in another, the nimble Gaul, faithful ever to the traditions of his *cuisine*, is busy scraping carrots for a *pot au feu*.

Not in one visit — not in two — could you, oh, reader! penetrate into a tithe of the mysteries of maritime London; not in half-a-dozen papers could I give you a complete description of Jack alive in London. We might wander through the dirty mazes of Wapping, glancing at the queer, disused old stairs, and admiring the admirable mixture of rotting boats, tarry cable, shell-fish, mud, and bad characters, which is there conglomerated. We could study Jack alive in the hostelrys, where, by night, in rooms the walls of which are decorated with verdant landscapes, he dances to the notes

of the enlivening fiddle; we might follow him in his uneven wanderings, sympathise with him when he has lost his register ticket, denounce the Jews and crimps who rob him. Let us hope that Jack's life will be amended with the times in which we are fortunate enough to live; and that those who have the power and the means, may not long want the inclination to stretch forth a helping hand to him. Ratcliffe and Shadwell, Cable Street and Back Lane, may be very curious in their internal economy, and very picturesque in their dirt; but it cannot be a matter of necessity that those who toil so hard, and contribute in so great a degree to our grandeur and prosperity, should be so unprotected and so little cared for.

CHIPS.

A FREE (AND EASY) SCHOOL.

IN an article with this title, published in Vol. X. p. 331 of *Household Words*, which is to be understood as a general but perfectly accurate description of real existing abuses, we find that some extracts were made from the published Prospectus of one particular School. Any of our readers who may recognise that original Prospectus, now or hereafter, will have the goodness to separate it from our description of the boys, who were as pale as maggots, and who wore unwholesome clothes; it being no part whatever of our intention to connect the two things.

A FEW MIRACLES.

WHATEVER may be the merit of certain disputes, which have agitated the mind of man from the first time that reason and speech enabled him to wrangle with his neighbour, there can be no doubt that implicit belief is the most ready settler of any such disputes. A man who believes that the same thing can be in two places at once, has a *material* (we use the term in more than one sense) advantage over the stickler for specific locality. A man who believes his own eyes, is sometimes uncourteously forced to disbelieve his neighbour's tongue; and then disputes arise, books are written, and no mortal dare say what page of remote history will chronicle the end of a dispute.

Our esteemed and pleasant friend, Mr. Hobbyhorse, is a striking instance of the delight and comfort experienced by a person who simply believes everything. He weeps over forgotten superstitions relative to throwing salt over the left shoulder of the hapless spiller; passing under ladders, mysterious information on the subject of death communicated by ticking where there are no clocks, and correspondence prognosticated in tallow candles. He is, in short, an enlightened convert to the nursery creed. When he cannot believe anything, it is quite painful to him. The remembrance of the middle ages makes him loathe carpets, city churches, intelligible church music, and

figures resembling anything human, with a pious, yet entertaining and pleasantly-expressed abhorrence.

But Mr. Hobbyhorse never tries to make converts. He only believes; and in this respect he has the advantage over a great many much greater enthusiasts in the cause of credulity. Nevertheless, chatting casually about miracles the other day, on our expressing our moderate, qualified, and roundly-asserted disbelief in the whole of the post-Apostolic works of that description, Will pointed quietly to certain volumes lying on a side table, laid his hand emphatically on his breast, and bade us read.

Reverentially, and with no small eagerness, did we approach these volumes. Most of them were histories of our own little steam-engine, tunnel-cutting, Exhibition-rearing isle; telling stories of its doings even when the excavations formed dwellings for its inhabitants, when wolves were not confined to "Mavor's Spelling-book," and when an ancient Briton presented an appearance that would have provoked liberal offerings from Baker Street or Egyptian Hall. All the early feuds that set kings, and priests, and barons, and serfs (there were few *people* then!) by the ears — all the intrigues, cheatings, grudges, that marked its gradual approach to civilisation; here they were, chronicled in lively, grotesque, quaint, and, above all, believing language. But the miracles were the best

part of all. We wondered we had ever wondered before, and we could not resist transcribing a few.

On the eve of the Nativity, in a certain town of Saxony, named Colewic, wherein was a church sacred to the manes and rest of Magnus the Martyr, the first mass had begun with all due solemnity, when on a sudden fifteen men and three women commenced dancing in the churchyard, enlivening their footsteps and marking the time by certain songs, neither remarkable for the propriety of words nor solemnity of the melody. Presbyter Robert could not hear himself speak. In vain he besought them to be quiet: the noise only increased, and the service came to a dead stand. The good priest, wound up to despair, cursed the whole company with a wish, "that they might go on singing for a whole year."

Morbid as may have been the passion for dancing under which these unfortunate victims laboured, they probably never bargained for keeping up the amusement so long, or getting "breathed" so thoroughly. However, they all fell dancing and dancing, and so on throughout the year. The son of the priest seized his sister's arm, and tried to stop her, but tore off her arm in the attempt: not a drop of blood followed. Had Shylock been capable of such a piece of surgery, he would have got his pound of flesh in spite of Portia or the Duke.

On they went dancing and

dancing. The rain fell not upon them, nor did hunger, thirst, or fatigue assail them; even their clothes and shoes shared in the excitement, and refused to wear out. First they sank into the ground up to their knees, then to their thighs, and at length a covering was built over them to shield off the rain.

At the year's end this singing and dancing ceased, and Herbert, Bishop of Cologne, pronounced the absolution which was to free them from what was already over, and made an attempt to reconcile them to the offended St. Magnus. Nevertheless, the daughter of the priest, with the two other women, died immediately; the rest slept three whole days and nights; some died afterwards, and, like a good many other malefactors, became famed for miracles. Paralysis and trembling of the limbs was the lingering and self-attesting punishment of the rest. — *William of Malmesbury*, book ii., chap. 10; *Roger de Wendover*, A.D. 1012.

In the year of grace 1200, there came a letter from heaven to Jerusalem, which was hung over the altar of St. Simeon in Golgotha, and before it the faithful prostrated themselves for the number (usual on such occasions) of three days and as many nights, and never thinking of opening it until the third hour of the third day, when the patriarch and the archbishop devoutly opened it, and read an awful warning, in which God denounced their neglect of the Sabbath day, and declared

that he had hitherto spared them only out of respect for the prayers and intercessions of the Virgin and the holy angels. Upon this the clergy determined to send preachers into every land, setting forth the purport of this letter, denouncing its threats against the disobedient, and working miracles in confirmation of what they preached. Among those who distinguished themselves chiefly in the latter respect, Eustace, the Abbot of Haye, set out for England, and commenced preaching in a town called Wi, near Dover. In the neighbourhood of that place was a spring, which the said Eustace did endow with such redoubtable virtues, that, by its taste alone, as of old by the pool of Bethesda, the blind saw, the lame walked, the dumb spake, the deaf heard, and the sick who drank in faith, were restored to health. It so happened that a certain woman, possessed of, the author says, he does not know how many devils, and mightily swollen and distended with dropsy, did, on a certain day, resort to Eustace for advice touching her health, spiritual and bodily. Even as the prophet of old spake unto Naaman, so quoth Eustace: "Be of good heart, daughter mine, and hie to the spring at Wi, which the Lord hath blessed. Drink of it in faith, and be whole." The woman departed, and did the priest's bidding. And, lo! straightway, as she had drunk of the blessed spring, she broke out into a fit of vomiting; and,

while many who had come on a like errand beheld, there fell from her two great black toads, who, to the end that their devilship might be set forth and approved beyond doubt, were transformed to two great black dogs, and, afterwards to asses. The woman stood astonished, but shortly ran after them in a rage, wishing to catch them; but the keeper of the spring, who right well did understand its virtues, sprinkled some of its water between the woman and the asses, upon which they forthwith flew up in the air and disappeared, leaving behind them traces of their foul and filthy nature. — *Roger of Wendover*, A.D. 1200.

About the same time, when the same warning was going forth throughout the world, a certain poor laundress living at Norfolk, despite the warnings of the Man of God, went, on a certain Saturday, at three o'clock, to wash clothes. Whilst hard at work, a man with a hoary beard and venerable countenance, whom she had never seen before, approached her, and, in reproaching terms, inquired how she had dared to wash clothes after three o'clock, and thus by unlawful toil to profane the holy Sabbath, after the warning she had received. She pleaded poverty, and said that, wretched and laborious as had been her life up to that time, she would be deprived of the means of existence, and bereft of her now miserable pittance, if she desisted from labour. Her mysterious

visitor disappeared, and the poor laundress toiled on, washing, wringing, and drying the clothes more eagerly than ever. But a terrible vengeance ensued; a small black pig stuck fast to the woman's left breast, and could by no strength be forced away; by continual sucking it drew away her blood and her strength. At length, brought down to utter exhaustion, the poor creature was compelled to beg from door to door, until, in the sight of many, a miserable death closed her life of toil and starvation. — *Roger de Wendover, ibid.*

But there is a yet more wonderful story, which doth, in a marvellous wise, attest the politeness and respect which one saint hath towards his brother in holiness. During the time when the Danes vexed England, and our good King Alfred with much ado succeeded in dislodging them, the bodies of many saints had been removed from their original sepulchres, in order to be conveyed to abodes of greater safety. Second to none in the whole calendar was St. Martin, venerated, saith Sidonius Appollinaris, throughout the whole of the wide earth; was removed to Auxerre by the clergy of his church, and placed in the church of St. Germain. Here his body, in which, though dead and food for worms, virtue did still exist, worked many and wondrous miracles, curing the sickness and infirmity of all who resorted to his shrine, and bestowing grace upon the souls of all his worshippers.

Whereupon, those who were so greatly benefited did, out of gratitude, contribute much of their worldly goods to reward the care of those who had brought the saint's body among them. But there arose a dispute between the people of Auxerre and the Tironais, about the great wealth that had flowed in from those who sought the aid of St. Martin. The Tironais laid claim to the whole, because their saint had called together the contributors by his miracles; the natives, on the other hand, asserted that St. Germain was not a whit behind the other in merit and in the will to do good. While granting, then, that both saints were equal, they maintained that the prerogative of their church ought to be respected. To solve this, a leprous person, wasted to mere skin and bone, and nearly at the last gasp, was placed between the bodies of the two saints. All human watching or interference was carefully prevented during the whole night; and, marvellous to relate, in the morning the skin of the man on his side that lay nearest Martin's corpse appeared clear and healthy, while that on the side turned towards Germain was discoloured and deformed as usual. Thus did the glory of St. Martin predominate. But, lest the miracle should be ascribed to chance, they turned the yet diseased side of the leper towards the same saint; and, in the morning, he appeared whole and sound, as though he had never been defiled with leprosy. And

herein was set forth not only the great and wondrous power of St. Martin, but likewise the complaisance of St. Germain; who, albeit, no doubt, possessed of fully equal power with his brother saint, yet, for that he was a stranger and visitor, did ill like to interfere in his cure; and like as a physician doth oftentimes say of the surgeon that he hath done all things aright, and doth decline interfering, so did St. Germain abstain from working a miracle, to the end that St. Martin might gain the more credit thereby. And not only did St. Martin gain much credit, but his followers did gain much money, both then and afterwards, until they were restored, by the return of peace, to their former residence. — *William of Malmesbury*, book ii., chap. 4.

In the year 681, Mummolus, abbot of the monastery of Fleury, being divinely admonished, sent his monk, Argulf, to Mount Cassino, to fetch thence the body of the most holy Benedict; who, with his sister Scolastica, had been buried in one coffin.

Directed by similar information from above, Argulf, in company with some devotees (whom he had met on a similar errand in quest of St. Scolastica), brought the bones of both the saints in a basket; and, having brought them as far as a place, called Neufoi, about a mile distant from the monastery of Fleury, the Abbot Mummolus received them with pious care, and placed the basket

in the church of St. Peter, prince of the Apostles. While taking out the bones, he separated them carefully from each other, placing the large bones in one pile, the small ones in another. Just as he had finished separating the bones of St. Benedict from those of St. Scolastica, two dead bodies, the one of a male, the other of a female, were brought forth for burial; when, wondrous to tell, on the larger bones being placed on the corpse of the male, he straightway was restored to life, by the merits of the ever-blessed St. Benedict. In like manner, when the smaller bones were placed on the body of the female she immediately returned to life. — *Roger of Wendover*, A.D. 681.

St. Swithin, who died in the year 862, sate, once upon a time, with some workmen, by the bridge of the City of Winchester, encouraging them in their labours by his presence and his holy conversation. A market-woman chanced to pass, with some eggs for sale, on her way into the city. The workmen made a crowd, jeering and hooting around her, and insolently broke all her eggs. The good bishop heard the cries of the poor woman, made the sign of the Cross over the eggs, and they became whole and sound as before. — *Roger of Wendover*, A.D. 862.

In the year 910, Rollo, the Norman chief, attacked the town of Chartres, hoping to take it by a sudden assault. After several attempts had been made, the

citizens, despairing of being able to withstand the besiegers much longer, gave themselves up to prayer, and erected on the highest part of the walls, by way of standard, the nether garment of the Virgin Mary, which Charlemagne had brought from Jerusalem, and had placed in the monastery of the Virgin in their city. Rollo and his followers laughed heartily, and went on as briskly as ever. But, that the power of the Mother of God might tame the rash boastfulness, and silence the jeering of the infidels, Rollo and his men were suddenly seized with a great and sudden panic, and hastily abandoning their arms and war-engines, they took to flight in utter confusion. The town's-people then gave pursuit, and slew many thousands of them with the edge of the sword, compelling Rollo himself to fly to Rouen, beaten and confounded. — *Roger of Wendover*, A. D. 910.

In the year A. D. 651, the holy Bishop Aidan fell sick, whilst tarrying not far from Bamborough, in Northumberland; but to the end that he might still continue his pious exhortations, the people set up a tent for him, close to the wall at the west end of the church. It so happened, that, feeling faint and sick unto death, he leaned against a post that served as a buttress to the walls, and gave up the ghost. Finan succeeded him.

Some years after, Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a vast and ravaging

hrode of barbarian soldiers, spread desolation everywhere before him with fire and sword, and burned down the church where the Bishop Aidan had died. But the post against which he had leaned, as he breathed his last, could in no wise be destroyed by the flames. In consequence of this miracle, the church was speedily rebuilt, and that very post was placed against the outside, as before. Some time after, the village and church were burned a second time, yet did that post stand stanch and unblackened by the flames; and when, in a manner wondrous to behold, the fire broke through the very holes in it wherewith it was fixed to the building, and destroyed the church, it could do no hurt to the post. When, therefore, the church was a third time built, they did not, as before, place that post on the outside, as a support, but within, as a memorial of the miracle; and the people coming in used to kneel down before the post, and implore God's mercy. And since then, many have been healed in divers manners; and chips that have been cut off from that post, and put into water, have had a like virtue over many distempers. — *Bede, Hist. Anglic.*, book iii., chap. 17.

St. Wulfric, who had given up his younger days to hounds and hawks, was at length converted; and so great was his austerity in habits, and earnestness in mortifying his fleshly inclinations, that he oftentimes at night would plunge

into a bath of cold water, and there repeat the Penitential Psalms. He had worn a common shirt of sackcloth; but, to the end that he might more vigorously make a campaign against the desires of this world and of the flesh, he craved of a certain knight, William, the lord of his village, a coat of mail.

William gladly gave him the mail-shirt; but Wulfric found that it struck against his knees, and prevented his constant genuflexions. Then he invited unto him the knight, in whom he confided, and told him touching the length of the mail-shirt. "It shall be sent to London," answered the knight, "and indented in any way you choose." — Quoth the man of God, "That would cause too long a delay, and might be thought done for ostentation's sake. Take these shears, in God's name, and perform the work with thine own hand." — Thus saying, he placed in the knight's hands a pair of shears, which he had brought from the knight's own house; and seeing him hesitate, as though he thought the hermit's senses were rambling, he continued: "Be bold, and linger not. I will to the Lord, and pray touching this business; meanwhile do thou cut bravely." — And so the two were busily employed — the one praying, and the other cutting — and the work prospered right well; for the knight felt as though he were cutting cloth, not iron, so readily did the shears sever it; but when the man of God ceased pray-

ing, the knight, who had not yet finished his work, could cut no longer. Wulfric came up, and asked him how he had succeeded. — "Right well," answered the knight "so far; but now, that you are come, the shears have ceased to cut." — "Fear not," quoth the hermit, "cut on as you have begun, with the same shears." — The knight, resuming confidence, finished his work with the same ease as before, and smoothed off the uneven parts without any difficulty. And, from that time forth, the man of God, without any shears, and with his fingers only, but with no less faith, used to distribute rings of the coat of mail, by the which all those who asked in charity were healed. — *Roger of Wendover, A. D. 1154.*

The good King Oswald, who would oftentimes send the dishes away from his own royal table, before he had partaken of them, in order that the poor might be fed and comforted therewith, was ever dispensing alms, and bestowing wholesome and pious instruction among his subjects. When he was slain by the merciless conqueror, Penda, his arms, with the hands, and his head, were cut off by the infuriated victor, and fixed on a stake, the dead trunk being laid to rest in the calm bosom of the earth, turning into its native dust; but the arms and hands which had dispensed so many alms, do remain to this day perfect, though the rest of the body — the bones only excepted — have mouldered into dust. —

William of Malmesbury, book i., chap. 3.

St. Edmund the Martyr, king of England, was a man devoted to God, and never, through the effeminacy of the times, did he relax his virtue and wholesome discipline. Hingwar and Hubba, two leaders of the Danes, who had come over to ravage the provinces of the Northumbrians and East Angles, seized the unresisting king, who had cast away his arms, and was lying on the ground in prayer; and, having fastened him to a tree, they shot him to death with arrows, and cruelly beheaded him. But the purity of his past life was set forth by unheard-of miracles. His head had been cast away by the Danes, and was hidden in a thicket. Whilst his subjects, who had tracked the footsteps of the enemy, as they departed, were seeking it, intending to solemnise the funeral rites of their king, by the interposition of God, the lifeless head uttered a voice, inviting all who were in search of it to approach. A wolf—a beast ever wont to prey upon dead bodies—was holding it in his paws, and guarding it, untouched; and the same beast, after the manner of a tame creature, quietly followed the bearers to the tomb, and neither did nor received any harm.

When the sacred body of the martyr king was committed to the earth, turf was placed over it, and a wooden chapel of trifling cost erected over the remains. But

soon did the merits of the departed saint manifest themselves after a wondrous fashion. Certain thieves, who had endeavoured to break into the church by night, he bound with invisible bands. This took place in their very attempt; and a right pleasant and diverting spectacle it was, to see the plunder hold fast the thief, so that he could neither give up the attempt, nor complete his wicked design. Therefore did Theocred, bishop of London, do more fitting honour to the remains of the pious king, building a nobler edifice over those sacred limbs, which did well show the glory of his unspotted soul, by their surprising soundness, and their delicate milk-white hue. One further circumstance doth indeed surpass human miracles, to wit, that the hair and nails of the dead king continued to grow; and these, Oswen, a holy woman, used yearly to clip and cut, that they might be relics for the veneration of posterity. Truly this was a holy boldness, for a woman to contemplate and handle limbs superior to the whole of this world. —

William of Malmesbury, book ii., chap. 13.

Of a like nature is the miracle which happened when the body of St. Hugh was being solemnly interred at Lincoln. A certain thief, taking advantage of the press and crowd of people assembling around the remains of this servant of God, cut away a woman's purse; but, by the merits of the blessed bishop, who showed

that, though life had quitted his body, virtue had not departed out of him, both the hands of the wicked thief were so contracted, and his fingers so firmly fixed to the palms of his hands, that, quite unable to hold the property he had stolen, he let it fall on the pavement, and, standing aghast and terrified, he was as one stricken with madness. While the people looked on, and mocked him with derision, he came to himself, and stood motionless. At length he began to weep bitterly; and, while all listened, he confessed the crime he had attempted to perpetrate. Then, turning to the priest, he exclaimed, "Pity, pity me, ye friends of God; for I renounce Satan and his works, to whom I have till now been a slave; and pray to the Lord for me, that he may not confound me in my penance, but may deal mercifully with me." And when prayer had been made for him, the chains of Satan, by which his hands were bound, were loosed; and, being made whole, he returned thanks to God and to the blessed bishop. — *Roger of Wendover*, A. D. 1200.

A little boy who went to school with the curate of the parish, amused himself, one day, jumping over the tomb of St. Rigobert, outraging his God and his Saviour. To the end that the merits of Rigobert might be known, and that a like audacity might not again take place, the boy's foot was instantly stricken, so that he became lame, and lost the use of one of his feet. This is why the

curate caused a barrier to be placed around the tomb, fearing lest some one in ignorance might run the risk of a like punishment. — *Histoire de l'Eglise de Reims*, lib. ii., chap. 14, in *Bibliothèque de Poche*, vol. iv., p. 140.

And so much, reader, for "a few miracles." Perhaps your more recent experience may add a few to the list.

OUR SOCIETY AT CRANFORD.

In the first place, Cranford is in possession of the Amazons; all the holders of houses, above a certain rent, are women. If a married couple come to settle in the town, somehow the gentleman disappears; he is either fairly frightened to death by being the only man in the Cranford evening parties, or he is accounted for by being with his regiment, his ship, or closely engaged in business all the week in the great neighbouring commercial town of Drumble, distant only twenty miles on a railroad. In short, whatever does become of the gentlemen, they are not at Cranford. What could they do if they were there? The surgeon has his round of thirty miles, and sleeps at Cranford; but every man cannot be a surgeon. For keeping the trim gardens full of choice flowers without a weed to speck them; for frightening away little boys who look wistfully at the said flowers through the railings; for rushing out at the geese that occasionally venture into the

gardens if the gates are left open; for deciding questions of literature and politics without troubling themselves with unnecessary reasons or arguments; for obtaining clear and correct knowledge of everybody's affairs in the parish; for keeping their neat maid-servants in admirable order; for kindness (somewhat dictatorial) to the poor, and real tender good offices to each other whenever any are in distress, the ladies of Cranford are quite sufficient. "A man," as one of them observed to me once, "is so in the way in the house!" Although the ladies of Cranford know all each other's proceedings, they are exceedingly indifferent to each other's opinions. Indeed, as each has her own individuality, not to say eccentricity, pretty strongly developed, nothing is so easy as verbal retaliation; but somehow good-will reigns among them to a considerable degree.

The Cranford ladies have only an occasional little quarrel, spirited out in a few peppery words and angry jerks of the head; just enough to prevent the even tenor of their lives from becoming too flat. Their dress is very independent of fashion; as they observe, "What does it signify how we dress here at Cranford, where everybody knows us?" And if they go from home, their reason is equally cogent: "What does it signify how we dress here, where nobody knows us?" The materials of their clothes are, in general, good and plain, and most of them

are nearly as scrupulous as Miss Tyler, of cleanly memory; but I will answer for it, the last gigot, the last tight and scanty petticoat in wear in England, was seen in Cranford — and seen without a smile.

I can testify to a magnificent family red silk umbrella, under which a gentle little spinster, left alone of many brothers and sisters, used to patter to church on rainy days. Have you any red silk umbrellas in London? We had a tradition of the first that had ever been seen in Cranford; and the little boys mobbed it, and called it "a stick in petticoats." It might have been the very red silk one I have described, held by a strong father over a troop of little ones; the poor little lady — the survivor of all — could scarcely carry it.

Then there were rules and regulations for visiting and calls; and they were announced to any young people, who might be staying in the town, with all the solemnity with which the old Manx laws were read once a year on the Tyne-wold.

"Our friends have sent to inquire how you are after your journey to-night, my dear," (fifteen miles, in a gentleman's carriage); "they will give you some rest to-morrow, but the next day, I have no doubt, they will call; so be at liberty after twelve; — from twelve to three are our calling-hours."

Then, after they had called,

"It is the third day; I dare say your Mamma has told you, my

dear, never to let more than three days elapse between receiving a call and returning it; and also, that you are never to stay longer than a quarter of an hour."

"But am I to look at my watch? How am I to find out when a quarter of an hour has passed?"

"You must keep thinking about the time, my dear, and not allow yourself to forget it in conversation."

As everybody had this rule in their minds, whether they received or paid a call, of course no absorbing subject was ever spoken about. We kept ourselves to short sentences of small talk, and were punctual to our time.

I imagine that a few of the gentlefolks of Cranford were poor, and had some difficulty in making both ends meet; but they were like the Spartans, and concealed their smart under a smiling face. We none of us spoke of money, because that subject savoured of commerce and trade, and though some might be poor, we were all aristocratic. The Cranfordians had that kindly *esprit de corps* which made them overlook all deficiencies in success when some among them tried to conceal their poverty. When Mrs. Forrester gave a party in her baby-house of a dwelling, and the little maiden disturbed the ladies on the sofa by a request that she might get the tea-tray out from underneath, every one took this novel proceeding as the most natural thing in the world; and talked on about household forms and ceremonies,

as if we all believed that our hostess had a regular servants' hall, second table, with housekeeper and steward; instead of the one little charity-school maiden, whose short ruddy arms could never have been strong enough to carry the tray up-stairs, if she had not been assisted in private by her mistress, who now sate in state, pretending not to know what cakes were sent up; though she knew, and we knew, and she knew that we knew, and we knew that she knew that we knew, she had been busy all the morning making tea-bread and sponge-cakes.

There were one or two consequences arising from this general but unacknowledged poverty, and this very much acknowledged gentility, which were not amiss, and which might be introduced into many circles of society to their great improvement. For instance, the inhabitants of Cranford kept early hours, and clattered home in their pattens, under the guidance of a lantern-bearer, about nine o'clock at night; and the whole town was abed and asleep by half-past ten. Moreover, it was considered "vulgar" (a tremendous word in Cranford) to give anything expensive, in the way of eatable or drinkable, at the evening entertainments. Wafer bread-and-butter and sponge-biscuits were all that the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson gave; and she was sister-in-law to the late Earl of Cranford, although she did practise such "elegant economy."

"Elegant economy!" How na-

turally one falls back into the phraseology of Cranford! There, economy was always "elegant," and money-spending always "vulgar and ostentatious;" a sort of sour-grapeism, which made us very peaceful and satisfied. I never shall forget the dismay felt when a certain Captain Brown came to live at Cranford, and openly spoke about his being poor. Not in a whisper to an intimate friend, the doors and windows being previously closed; but, in the public street! in a loud military voice! alleging his poverty as a reason for not taking a particular house. The ladies of Cranford were already rather moaning over the invasion of their territories by a man and a gentleman. He was a half-pay Captain, and had obtained some situation on a neighbouring railroad, which had been vehemently petitioned against by the little town; and if, in addition to his masculine gender, and his connexion with the obnoxious railroad, he was so brazen as to talk of being poor — why! then, indeed, he must be sent to Coventry. Death was as true and as common as poverty; yet people never spoke about that, loud out in the streets. It was a word not to be mentioned to ears polite. We had tacitly agreed to ignore that any with whom we associated on terms of visiting equality could ever be prevented by poverty from doing anything that they wished. If we walked home to or from a party, it was because the night was so fine, or the air so refreshing; not because sedan-chairs were expensive. If we wore prints, instead of summer-silks, it was because we preferred a washing material; and so on, till we blinded ourselves to the vulgar fact, that we were, all of us, people of very moderate means. Of course, then, we did not know what to make of a man who could not speak of poverty as if it was not a disgrace. Yet, somehow Captain Brown made himself respected in Cranford, and was called upon, in spite of all resolutions to the contrary. I was surprised to hear his opinions quoted as authority, at a visit which I paid to Cranford, about a year after he had settled in the town. My own friends had been among the bitterest opponents of any proposal to visit Captain Brown and his daughters, only twelve months before; and now he was even admitted in the tabooed hours before twelve. True, it was to discover the cause of a smoking chimney, before the fire was lighted; but still Captain Brown walked upstairs, nothing daunted, spoke in a voice too large for the room, and joked quite in the way of a tame man, about the house. He had been blind to all the small slights and omissions of trivial ceremonies with which he had been received. He had been friendly, though the Cranford ladies had been cool: he had answered small sarcastic compliments in good faith; and, with his manly frankness had overpowered all the shrinking which met him as a man who was not

ashamed to be poor. And, at last, his excellent masculine common sense and his facility in devising expedients to overcome domestic dilemmas, had gained him an extraordinary place as authority among the Cranford ladies. He, himself, went on in his course, as unaware of his popularity, as he had been of the reverse; and I am sure he was startled one day, when he found his advice so highly esteemed, as to make some counsel which he had given in jest, be taken in sober, serious earnest.

It was on this subject; — an old lady had an Alderney cow, which she looked upon as a daughter. You could not pay the short quarter-of-an-hour call, without being told of the wonderful milk or wonderful intelligence of this animal. The whole town knew and kindly regarded Miss Betsy Barker's Alderney; therefore great was the sympathy and regret when, in an unguarded moment, the poor cow tumbled into a lime-pit. She moaned so loudly that she was soon heard, and rescued; but meanwhile the poor beast had lost most of her hair, and came out looking naked, cold, and miserable, in a bare skin. Everybody pitied the animal, though a few could not restrain their smiles at her droll appearance. Miss Betsy Barker absolutely cried with sorrow and dismay; and it was said she thought of trying a bath of oil. This remedy, perhaps, was recommended by some one of the number whose advice she asked; but the proposal, if ever it was

made, was knocked on the head by Captain Brown's decided, "Get her a flannel waistcoat and flannel drawers, Ma'am, if you wish to keep her alive. But my advice is, kill the poor creature at once."

Miss Betsy Barker dried her eyes, and thanked the Captain heartily; she set to work, and by-and-bye all the town turned out to see the Alderney meekly going to her pasture, clad in dark grey flannel. I have watched her myself many a time. Do you ever see cows dressed in grey flannel in London?

Captain Brown had taken a small house on the outskirts of the town, where he lived with his two daughters. He must have been upwards of sixty at the time of the first visit I paid to Cranford, after I had left it as a residence. But he had a wiry, well-trained, elastic figure; a stiff military throw-back of his head, and a springing step, which made him appear much younger than he was. His eldest daughter looked almost as old as himself, and betrayed the fact that his real, was more than his apparent, age. Miss Brown must have been forty; she had a sickly, pained, care-worn expression on her face, and looked as if the gaiety of youth had long faded out of sight. Even when young she must have been plain and hard-featured. Miss Jessie Brown was ten years younger than her sister, and twenty shades prettier. Her face was round and dimpled. Miss Jenkyns once said, in a passion against Captain Brown

(the cause of which I will tell you presently), "that she thought it was time for Miss Jessie to leave off her dimples, and not always be trying to look like a child." It was true there was something child-like in her face; and there will be, I think, till she dies, though she should live to a hundred. Her eyes were large blue wandering eyes, looking straight at you; her nose was unformed and snub, and her lips were red and dewy; she wore her hair, too, in little rows of curls, which heightened this appearance. I do not know if she was pretty or not; but I liked her face, and so did everybody, and I do not think she could help her dimples. She had something of her father's jauntiness of gait and manner; and any female observer might detect a slight difference in the attire of the two sisters — that of Miss Jessie being about two pounds per annum more expensive than Miss Brown's. Two pounds was a large sum in Captain Brown's annual disbursements.

Such was the impression made upon me by the Brown family, when I first saw them altogether in Cranford church. The Captain I had met before — on the occasion of the smoky chimney, which he had cured by some simple alteration in the flue. In church, he held his double eye-glass to his eyes during the Morning Hymn, and then lifted up his head erect, and sang out loud and joyfully. He made the responses louder than the clerk — an old man with

a piping feeble voice, who, I think, felt aggrieved at the Captain's sonorous bass, and quavered higher and higher in consequence.

On coming out of church, the brisk Captain paid the most gallant attention to his two daughters. He nodded and smiled to his acquaintances; but he shook hands with none until he had helped Miss Brown to unfurl her umbrella, had relieved her of her prayer-book, and had waited patiently till she, with trembling nervous hands, had taken up her gown to walk through the wet roads.

I wondered what the Cranford ladies did with Captain Brown at their parties. We had often rejoiced, in former days, that there was no gentleman to be attended to, and to find conversation for, at the card-parties. We had congratulated ourselves upon the snugness of the evenings; and, in our love for gentility and distaste of mankind, we had almost persuaded ourselves that to be a man was to be "vulgar;" so that when I found my friend and hostess, Miss Jenkyns, was going to have a party in my honour, and that Captain and the Miss Browns were invited, I wondered much what would be the course of the evening. Card-tables, with green baize tops, were set out by day-light, just as usual; it was the third week in November, so the evenings closed in about four. Candles, and clean packs of cards, were arranged on each table. The fire was made up, the neat maid-ser-

vant had received her last directions; and, there we stood dressed in our best, each with a candle-lighter in our hands, ready to dart at the candles as soon as the first knock came. Parties in Cranford were solemn festivities, making the ladies feel gravely elated, as they sat together in their best dresses. As soon as three had arrived, we sat down to "Preference," I being the unlucky fourth. The next four comers were put down immediately to another table; and, presently, the tea-trays, which I had seen set out in the store-room as I passed in the morning, were placed each on the middle of a card-table. The china was delicate egg-shell; the old-fashioned silver glittered with polishing; but the eatables were of the slightest description. While the trays were yet on the tables, Captain and the Miss Browns came in; and I could see, that somehow or other, the Captain was a favourite with all the ladies present. Ruffled brows were smoothed, sharp voices lowered at his approach. Miss Brown looked ill, and depressed almost to gloom. Miss Jessie smiled as usual, and seemed nearly as popular as her father. He immediately and quietly assumed the man's place in the room; attended to every one's wants, lessened the pretty maid-servant's labour by waiting on empty cups, and bread-and-butterless ladies; and yet did it all in so easy and dignified a manner, and so much as if it were a matter of course for the

strong to attend to the weak, that he was a true man throughout. He played for three-penny points with as grave an interest as if they had been pounds; and yet, in all his attention to strangers, he had an eye on his suffering daughter; for suffering I was sure she was, though to many eyes she might only appear to be irritable. Miss Jessie could not play cards; but she talked to the sitters-out, who, before her coming, had been rather inclined to be cross. She sang, too, to an old cracked piano, which I think had been a spinnet in its youth. Miss Jessie sang "Jock of Hazeldean" a little out of tune; but we were none of us musical, though Miss Jenkyns beat time, out of time, by way of appearing to be so.

It was very good of Miss Jenkyns to do this; for I had seen that, a little while before, she had been a good deal annoyed by Miss Jessie Brown's unguarded admission (*à-propos* of Shetland wool) that she had an uncle, her mother's brother, who was a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. Miss Jenkyns tried to drown this confession by a terrible cough — for the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson was sitting at the card-table nearest Miss Jessie, and what would she say or think if she found out she was in the same room with a shopkeeper's niece! But Miss Jessie Brown (who had no tact, as we all agreed, the next morning) *would* repeat the information, and assure Miss Pole she could easily get her the identical Shetland wool required,

"through my uncle, who has the best assortment of Shetland goods of any one in Edinbro'." It was to take the taste of this out of our mouths, and the sound of this out of our ears, that Miss Jenkyns proposed music; so I say again, it was very good of her to beat time to the song.

When the trays re-appeared with biscuits and wine, punctually at a quarter to nine, there was conversation; comparing of cards, and talking over tricks; but, by-and-bye, Captain Brown sported a bit of literature.

"Have you seen any numbers of 'Hood's Own?'" said he. (It was then publishing in parts.) "Capital thing!"

Now, Miss Jenkyns was daughter of a deceased rector of Cranford; and, on the strength of a number of manuscript sermons, and a pretty good library of divinity, considered herself literary, and looked upon any conversation about books as a challenge to her. So she answered and said, "Yes, she had seen it; indeed, she might say she had read it."

"And what do you think of it?" exclaimed Captain Brown. "Isn't it famously good?"

So urged, Miss Jenkyns could not but speak.

"I must say I don't think it is by any means equal to Dr. Johnson. Still, perhaps, the author is young. Let him persevere, and who knows what he may become if he will take the great Doctor for his model." This was evidently too much for Captain Brown to

take placidly; and I saw the words on the tip of his tongue before Miss Jenkyns had finished her sentence.

"It is quite a different sort of thing, my dear Madam," he began.

"I am quite aware of that," returned she. "And I make allowances, Captain Brown."

"Just allow me to read you a scene out of this month's number," pleaded he. "I had it only this morning, and I don't think the company can have read it yet."

"As you please," said she, settling herself with an air of resignation. He read the account of the gentleman who was terrified out of his wits by political events, who "could no more collect himself than the Irish tithes." Some of us laughed heartily. I did not dare, because I was staying in the house. Miss Jenkyns sat in patient gravity. When it was ended, she turned to me, and said with mild dignity,

"Fetch me 'Rasselas,' my dear, out of the book-room."

When I brought it to her, she turned to Captain Brown:

"Now allow *me* to read you a scene, and then the present company can judge between your favourite, Mr. Hood, or Dr. Johnson."

She read one of the conversations between Rasselas and Imlac, in a high-pitched majestic voice; and when she had ended, she said, "I imagine I am now justified in my preference of Dr. Johnson, as a writer of fiction." The Captain

screwed his lips up, and drummed on the table, but he did not speak. She thought she would give a finishing blow or two.

"I consider it vulgar, and below the dignity of literature, to publish in numbers."

"How was the 'Rambler' published, Ma'am?" asked Captain Brown, in a low voice; which I think Miss Jenkyns could not have heard.

"Dr. Johnson's style is a model for young beginners. My father recommended it to me when I began to write letters. — I have formed my own style upon it; I recommend it to your favourite."

"I should be very sorry for him to exchange his style for any such pompous writing," said Captain Brown.

Miss Jenkyns felt this as a personal affront, in a way of which the Captain had not dreamed. Epistolary writing, she and her friends considered as her *forte*. Many a copy of many a letter have I seen written and corrected on the slate, before she "seized the half-hour just previous to post-time to assure" her friends of this or of that; and Dr. Johnson was, as she said, her model in these compositions. She drew herself up with dignity, and only replied to Captain Brown's last remark by saying, with marked emphasis on every syllable, "I prefer Dr. Johnson to Mr. Hood."

It is said — I won't vouch for the fact — that Captain Brown was heard to say, *sotto voce*, "D—n

Dr. Johnson!" If he did, he was penitent afterwards, as he showed by going so stand near Miss Jenkyns's armchair, and endeavouring to beguile her into conversation on some more pleasing subject. But she was inexorable. The next day, she made the remark I have mentioned, about Miss Jessie's dimples.

It was impossible to live a month at Cranford, and not know the daily habits of each resident; and long before my visit was ended, I knew much concerning the whole Brown trio. There was nothing new to be discovered respecting their poverty; for they had spoken simply and openly about that from the very first. They made no mystery of the necessity for their being economical. All that remained to be discovered was the Captain's infinite kindness of heart, and the various modes in which, unconsciously to himself, he manifested it. Some little anecdotes were talked about for some time after they occurred. As we did not read much, and as all the ladies were pretty well suited with servants, there was a dearth of subjects for conversation. We, therefore, discussed the circumstance of the Captain taking a poor old woman's dinner out of her hands, one very slippery Sunday. He had met her returning from the bakehouse as he came from church, and noticed her precarious footing; and, with the grave dignity with which he did everything, he relieved her of her burden, and steered along

the street by her side, carrying her baked mutton and potatoes safely home. This was thought very eccentric; and it was rather expected that he would pay a round of calls, on the Monday morning, to explain and apologise to the Cranford sense of propriety: but he did no such thing; and then it was decided that he was ashamed, and was keeping out of sight. In a kindly pity for him, we began to say — “After all, the Sunday morning’s occurrence showed great goodness of heart;” and it was resolved that he should be comforted on his next appearance amongst us; but, lo! he came down upon us, untouched by any sense of shame, speaking loud and bass as ever, his head thrown back, his wig as jaunty and well-curved as usual, and we were obliged to conclude he had forgotten all about Sunday.

Miss Pole and Miss Jessie Brown had set up a kind of intimacy, on the strength of the Shetland wool and the new knitting stitches; so it happened that when I went to visit Miss Pole, I saw more of the Browns than I had done while staying with Miss Jenkyns; who had never got over what she called Captain Brown’s disparaging remarks upon Dr. Johnson, as a writer of light and agreeable fiction. I found that Miss Brown was seriously ill of some lingering, incurable complaint, the pain occasioned by which gave the uneasy expression to her face that I had taken for unmitigated crossness. Cross, too,

she was at times, when the nervous irritability occasioned by her disease became past endurance. Miss Jessie bore with her at these times even more patiently than she did with the bitter self-upbraidings by which they were invariably succeeded. Miss Brown used to accuse herself, not merely of hasty and irritable temper; but also of being the cause why her father and sister were obliged to pinch, in order to allow her the small luxuries which were necessities in her condition. She would so fain have made sacrifices for them and have lightened their cares, that the original generosity of her disposition added acerbity to her temper. All this was borne by Miss Jessie and her father with more than placidity — with absolute tenderness. I forgave Miss Jessie her singing out of time, and her juvenility of dress, when I saw her at home. I came to perceive that Captain Brown’s dark Brutus wig and padded coat (alas! too often threadbare) were remnants of the military smartness of his youth, which he now wore unconsciously. He was a man of infinite resources, gained in his barrack experience. As he confessed, no one could black his boots to please him, except himself; but, indeed, he was not above saving the little maid-servant’s labours in every way, feeling, probably, that his daughter’s illness made the place a hard one.

He endeavoured to make peace with Miss Jenkyns soon after the

memorable dispute I have named, by a present of a wooden fire-shovel (his own making), having heard her say how much the grating of an iron one annoyed her. She received the present with cool gratitude, and thanked him formally. When he was gone, she bad me put it away in the lumber-room; feeling, probably, that no present from a man who preferred Mr. Hood to Dr. Johnson could be less jarring than an iron fire-shovel.

Such was the state of things when I left Cranford and went to Drumble. I had, however, several correspondents who kept me *au fait* to the proceedings of the dear little town. There was Miss Pole, who was becoming as much absorbed in crochet as she had been once in knitting; and the burden of whose letter was something like, "But don't you forget the white worsted at Flint's," of the old song; for, at the end of every sentence of news, came a fresh direction as to some crochet commission which I was to execute for her. Miss Matilda Jenkyns (who did not mind being called Miss Matey, when Miss Jenkyns was not by), wrote nice, kind, rambling letters; now and then venturing into an opinion of her own; but suddenly pulling herself up, and either begging me not to name what she had said, as Deborah thought differently, and *she* knew; or else, putting in a postscript to the effect that, since writing the above, she had been talking over the subject with Deborah, and

was quite convinced that, &c.; — (here, probably, followed a recantation of every opinion she had given in the letter.) Then came Miss Jenkyns — Deborah, as she liked Miss Matey to call her; her father having once said that the Hebrew name ought to be so pronounced. I secretly think she took the Hebrew prophetess for a model in character; and, indeed, she was not unlike the stern prophetess in some ways; making allowance, of course, for modern customs and difference in dress. Miss Jenkyns wore a cravat, and a little bonnet like a jockey-cap, and altogether had the appearance of a strong-minded woman; therefore she would have despised the modern idea of women being equal to men. Equal, indeed! she knew they were superior. — But to return to her letters. Everything in them was stately and grand, like herself. I have been looking them over (dear Miss Jenkyns, how I loved her!) and I will give an extract, more especially because it relates to our friend Captain Brown: —

"The Honourable Mrs. Jamieson has only just quitted me; and, in the course of conversation, she communicated to me the intelligence, that she had yesterday received a call from her revered husband's quondam friend, Lord Mauleverer. You will not easily conjecture what brought his lordship within the precincts of our little town. It was to see Captain Brown, with whom, it appears,

his lordship was acquainted in the 'plumed wars,' and who had the privilege of averting destruction from his lordship's head, when some great peril was impending over it, off the misnomered Cape of Good Hope. You know our friend the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson's deficiency in the spirit of innocent curiosity; and you will, therefore, not be so much surprised when I tell you she was quite unable to disclose to me the exact nature of the peril in question. I was anxious, I confess, to ascertain in what manner Captain Brown, with his limited establishment, could receive so distinguished a guest; and I discovered that his lordship retired to rest; and, let us hope, to refreshing slumbers, at the Angel Hotel; but shared the Brunonian meals during the two days that he honoured Cranford with his august presence. Mrs. Johnson, our civil butcher's wife, informs me that Miss Jessie purchased a leg of lamb; but, besides this, I can hear of no preparation whatever to give a suitable reception to so distinguished a visitor. Perhaps they entertained him with 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul;' and to us, who are acquainted with Captain Brown's sad want of relish for 'the pure wells of English undefiled,' it may be matter for congratulation, that he has had the opportunity of improving his taste by holding converse with an elegant and refined member of the British aristocracy. But from

some mundane feelings who is free?"

Miss Pole and Miss Matey wrote to me by the same post. Such a piece of news as Lord Mauleverer's visit was not to be lost on the Cranford letter-writers: they made the most of it. Miss Matey humbly apologised for writing at the same time as her sister, who was so much more capable than she to describe the honour done to Cranford; but, in spite of a little bad spelling, Miss Matey's account gave me the best idea of the commotion occasioned by his lordship's visit, after it had occurred; for, except the people at the Angel, the Browns, Mrs. Jamieson, and a little lad his lordship had sworn at for driving a dirty hoop against the aristocratic legs, I could not hear of any one with whom his lordship had held conversation.

My next visit to Cranford was in the summer. There had been neither births, deaths, nor marriages since I was there last. Everybody lived in the same house, and wore pretty nearly the same well-preserved, old-fashioned clothes. The greatest event was, that Miss Jenkynses had purchased a new carpet for the drawing-room. O, the busy work Miss Matey and I had in chasing the sunbeams, as they fell in an afternoon right down on this carpet through the blindless window! We spread newspapers over the places, and sat down to our book or our work; and, lo! in a quarter of an hour the sun had moved,

and was blazing away on a fresh spot; and down again we went on our knees to alter the position of the newspapers. We were very busy, too, one whole morning before Miss Jenkyns gave her party, in following her directions, and in cutting out and stitching together pieces of newspaper, so as to form little paths to every chair, set for the expected visitors, lest their shoes might dirty or defile the purity of the carpet. Do you make paper paths for every guest to walk upon in London?

Captain Brown and Miss Jenkyns were not very cordial to each other. The literary dispute, of which I had seen the beginning, was a "raw," the slightest touch on which made them wince. It was the only difference of opinion they had ever had; but that difference was enough. Miss Jenkyns could not refrain from talking at Captain Brown; and though he did not reply, he drummed with his fingers; which action she felt and resented as very disparaging to Dr. Johnson. He was rather ostentatious in his preference of the writings of Mr. Hood; would walk through the street so absorbed in them, that he all but ran against Miss Jenkyns; and though his apologies were earnest and sincere, and though he did not, in fact, do more than startle her and himself, she owned to me she had rather he had knocked her down, if he had only been reading a higher style of literature. The poor, brave Captain! he looked older, and more worn,

and his clothes were very threadbare. But he seemed as bright and cheerful as ever, unless he was asked about his daughter's health.

"She suffers a great deal, and she must suffer more; we do what we can to alleviate her pain — God's will be done!" He took off his hat at these last words. I found, from Miss Pole, that everything had been done, in fact. A medical man, of high repute in that country neighbourhood, had been sent for, and every injunction he had given was attended to, regardless of expense. Miss Pole was sure they denied themselves many things in order to make the invalid comfortable; but they never spoke about it; and as for Miss Jessie! "I really think she's an angel," said poor Miss Pole, quite overcome. "To see her way of bearing with Miss Brown's crossness, and the bright face she puts on after she's been sitting up a whole night and scolded above half of it, is quite beautiful. Yet she looks as neat and as ready to welcome the Captain at breakfast-time, as if she had been asleep in the Queen's bed all night. My dear! you could never laugh at her prim little curls or her pink bows again, if you saw her as I have done." I could only feel very penitent, and greet Miss Jessie with double respect when I met her next. She looked faded and pinched; and her lips began to quiver, as if she was very weak, when she spoke of her sister. But she brightened, and sent back the tears that were glittering in her pretty eyes, as she said: —

"But, to be sure, what a town Cranford is for kindness! I don't suppose any one has a better dinner than usual cooked, but the best part of all comes in a little covered basin for my sister. The poor people will leave their earliest vegetables at our door for her. They speak short and gruff, as if they were ashamed of it; but I am sure it often goes to my heart to see their thoughtfulness." The tears now came back and overflowed; but after a minute or two, she began to scold herself, and ended by going away, the same cheerful Miss Jessie as ever.

"But why does not this Lord Mauleverer do something for the man who saved his life?" said I.

"Why, you see, unless Captain Brown has some reason for it, he never speaks about being poor; and he walked along by his lordship, looking as happy and cheerful as a prince; and as they never call attention to their dinner by apologies, and as Miss Brown was better that day, and all seemed bright, I dare say his lordship never knew how much care there was in the back-ground. He did send game in the winter pretty often, but now he is gone abroad."

I had often occasion to notice the use that was made of fragments and small opportunities in Cranford; the rose leaves that were gathered ere they fell, to make into a potpourrie for some one who had no garden; the little bundles of lavender-flowers sent to strew the drawers of some town-dweller, or to burn in the chamber

of some invalid. Things that many would despise, and actions which it seemed scarcely worth while to perform, were all attended to in Cranford. Miss Jenkyns stuck an apple full of cloves, to be heated and smell pleasantly in Miss Brown's room; and as she put in each clove, she uttered a Johnsonian sentence. Indeed, she never could think of the Browns without talking Johnson; and, as they were seldom absent from her thoughts just then, I heard many a rolling three-piled sentence.

Captain Brown called one day to thank Miss Jenkyns for many little kindnesses, which I did not know until then that she had rendered. He had suddenly become like an old man; his deep bass voice had a quavering in it; his eyes looked dim, and the lines on his face were deep. He did not — could not — speak cheerfully of his daughter's state, but he talked with manly pious resignation, and not much. Twice over he said, "What Jessie has been to us, God only knows!" and after the second time, he got up hastily, shook hands all round without speaking, and left the room.

That afternoon we perceived little groups in the street, all listening with faces aghast to some tale or other. Miss Jenkyns wondered what could be the matter, for some time before she took the undignified step of sending Jenny out to inquire.

Jenny came back with a white face of terror. "Oh, Ma'am! oh, Miss Jenkyns, Ma'am! Captain

Brown is killed by them nasty cruel railroads!" and she burst into tears. She, along with many others, had experienced the poor Captain's kindness.

"How? — where — where? Good God! Jenny, don't waste time in crying, but tell us something." Miss Matey rushed out into the street at once, and collared the man who was telling the tale.

"Come in — come to my sister at once, — Miss Jenkyns, the rector's daughter. Oh, man, man! say it is not true," — she cried, as she brought the affrighted carter, sleeking down his hair, into the drawing-room, where he stood with his wet boots on the new carpet, and no one regarded it.

"Please, mum, it is true. I seed it myself," and he shuddered at the recollection. "The Captain was a-reading some new book as he was deep in, a-waiting for the down train; and there was a little lass as wanted to come to it's mammy, and gave its sister the slip, and came toddling across the line. And he looked up sudden at the sound of the train coming, and seed the child, and he darted on the line and cotched it up, and his foot slipped, and the train came over him in no time. Oh Lord, Lord! Mum, it's quite true — and they've come over to tell his daughters. The child's safe, though, with only a bang on its shoulder, as he threw it to its mammy. Poor Captain would be glad of that, mum, would not he, God bless him!" The great rough carter puckered up his manly face,

and turned away to hide his tears. I turned to Miss Jenkyns. She looked very ill, as if she were going to faint, and signed to me to open the window.

"Matilda, bring me my bonnet. I must go to those girls. God pardon me if ever I have spoken contemptuously to the Captain!"

Miss Jenkyns arrayed herself to go out, telling Miss Matilda to give the man a glass of wine. While she was away, Miss Matey and I huddled over the fire, talking in a low and awestruck voice. I know we cried quietly all the time.

Miss Jenkyns came home in a silent mood, and we durst not ask her many questions. She told us that Miss Jessie had fainted, and that she and Miss Pole had had some difficulty to bring her round; but that, as soon as she recovered, she begged one of them to go and sit with her sister.

"Dr. Colburn says she cannot live many days, and she shall be spared this shock," said Miss Jessie, shivering with feelings to which she dared not give way.

"But how can you manage, my dear?" asked Miss Jenkyns; "you cannot bear up — she must see your tears."

"God will help me — I will not give way — she was asleep when the news came; she may be asleep yet. She would be so utterly miserable, not merely at my father's death, but to think of what would become of me; she is so good to me." She looked up earnestly in their faces with her soft true eyes, and Miss Pole told

Miss Jenkyns afterwards she could hardly bear it, knowing, as she did, how Miss Brown treated her sister.

However, it was settled according to Miss Jessie's wish. Miss Brown was to be told her father had been summoned to take a short journey on railway business. They had managed it in some way — Miss Jenkyns could not exactly say how. Miss Pole was to stop with Miss Jessie. Mrs. Jamieson had sent to inquire. And this was all we heard that night; and a sorrowful night it was. The next day a full account of the fatal accident was in the country paper, which Miss Jenkyns took in. Her eyes were very weak, she said, and she asked me to read it. When I came to "the gallant gentleman was deeply engaged in the perusal of Hood's Poems, which he had just received," Miss Jenkyns shook her head long and solemnly, and then sighed out, "Poor, dear, infatuated man!"

The corpse was to be taken from the station to the parish church, there to be interred. Miss Jessie had set her heart on following it to the grave; and no dissuasives could alter her resolve. Her restraint upon herself made her almost obstinate; she resisted all Miss Pole's entreaties, and Miss Jenkyns's advice. At last Miss Jenkyns gave up the point; and after a silence, which I feared portended some deep displeasure against Miss Jessie, Miss Jenkyns said she should accompany the latter to the funeral.

It is not fit for you to go alone. It would be against both propriety and humanity were I to allow it."

Miss Jessie seemed as if she did not half like this arrangement; but her obstinacy, if she had any, had been exhausted in her determination to go to the interment. She longed, poor thing! I have no doubt, to cry alone over the grave of the dear father, to whom she had been all in all; and to give way, for one little half-hour, uninterrupted by sympathy, and unobserved by friendship. But it was not to be. That afternoon Miss Jenkyns sent out for a yard of black crape, and employed herself busily in trimming the little black silk bonnet I have spoken about. When it was finished she put it on, and looked at us for approbation — admiration she despised. I was full of sorrow, but, by one of those whimsical thoughts which come unbidden into our heads, in times of deepest grief, I no sooner saw the bonnet than I was reminded of a helmet; and in that hybrid bonnet, half-helmet, half-jockey cap, did Miss Jenkyns attend Captain Brown's funeral; and I believe supported Miss Jessie with a tender indulgent firmness which was invaluable, allowing her to weep her passionate fill before they left.

Miss Pole, Miss Matey, and I, meanwhile, attended to Miss Brown: and hard work we found it to relieve her querulous and never-ending complaints. But if we were so weary and dispirited, what must Miss Jessie have been!

Yet she came back almost calm, as if she had gained a new strength. She put off her mourning dress, and came in, looking pale and gentle; thanking us each with a soft long pressure of the hand. She could even smile — a faint, sweet, wintry smile, as if to reassure us of her power to endure; but her look made our eyes fill suddenly with tears, more than if she had cried outright.

It was settled that Miss Pole was to remain with her all the watching live-long night; and that Miss Matey and I were to return in the morning to relieve them, and give Miss Jessie the opportunity for a few hours of sleep. But when the morning came, Miss Jenkyns appeared at the breakfast table, equipped in her helmet bonnet, and ordered Miss Matey to stay at home, as she meant to go and help to nurse. She was evidently in a state of great friendly excitement, which she showed by eating her breakfast standing, and scolding the household all round.

No nursing — no energetic strong-minded woman could help Miss Brown now. There was that in the room as we entered, which was stronger than us all, and made us shrink into solemn awestruck helplessness. Miss Brown was dying. We hardly knew her voice, it was so devoid of the complaining tone we had always associated with it. Miss Jessie told me afterwards that it, and her face too, were just what they had been formerly, when her mother's death left her the young anxious head of

the family, of whom only Miss Jessie survived.

She was conscious of her sister's presence, though not, I think, of ours. We stood a little behind the curtain; Miss Jessie knelt with her face near her sister's, in order to catch the last soft awful whispers.

"Oh, Jessie! Jessie! How selfish I have been! God forgive me for letting you sacrifice yourself for me as you did. I have so loved you — and yet I have thought only of myself. God forgive me!"

"Hush, love! hush!" said Miss Jessie, sobbing.

"And my father! my dear, dear father! I will not complain now, if God will give me strength to be patient. But, oh, Jessie! tell my father how I longed and yearned to see him at last, and to ask his forgiveness. He can never know now how I loved him — oh! if I might but tell him, before I die, what a life of sorrow his has been, and I have done so little to cheer him!"

A light came into Miss Jessie's face. "Would it comfort you, dearest, to think that he does know — would it comfort you, love, to know that his cares, his sorrows —" Her voice quivered, but she steadied it into calmness, — "Mary! he has gone before you to the place where the weary are at rest. He knows now how you loved him."

A strange look, which was not distress, came over Miss Brown's face. She did not speak for some

time, but then we saw her lips form the words, rather than heard the sound — “Father, mother, Harry, Archy!” — then, as if it was a new idea throwing a filmy shadow over her darkening mind — “But you will be alone — Jessie!”

Miss Jessie had been feeling this all during the silence, I think; for the tears rolled down her cheeks like rain, at these words; and she could not answer at first. Then she put her hands together tight, and lifted them up, and said, — but not to us —

“Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”

In a few moments more, Miss Brown lay calm and still; never to sorrow or murmur more.

After this second funeral, Miss Jenkyns insisted that Miss Jessie should come to stay with her, rather than go back to the desolate house; which, in fact, we learned from Miss Jessie, must now be given up, as she had not wherewithal to maintain it. She had something about twenty pounds per annum, besides the interest of the money for which the furniture would sell; but she could not live upon that; and so we talked over her qualifications for earning money.

“I can sew neatly,” said she, “and I like nursing. I think, too, I could manage a house, if any one would try me as housekeeper; or I would go into a shop, as saleswoman, if they would have patience with me at first.”

Miss Jenkyns declared, in an angry voice, that she should do

no such thing; and talked to herself about “some people having no idea of their rank as a Captain’s daughter,” nearly an hour afterwards, when she brought Miss Jessie up a basin of delicately-made arrow-root, and stood over her like a dragoon until the last spoonful was finished: then she disappeared. Miss Jessie began to tell me some more of the plans which had suggested themselves to her, and insensibly fell into talking of the days that were past and gone, and interested me so much, I neither knew nor heeded how time passed. We were both startled when Miss Jenkyns reappeared, and caught us crying. I was afraid lest she would be displeased, as she often said that crying hindered digestion, and I knew she wanted Miss Jessie to get strong; but, instead, she looked queer and excited, and fidgeted round us without saying anything. At last she spoke. “I have been so much startled — no, I’ve not been at all startled — don’t mind me, my dear Miss Jessie — I’ve been very much surprised — in fact, I’ve had a caller, whom you knew once, my dear Miss Jessie —”

Miss Jessie went very white, then flushed scarlet, and looked eagerly at Miss Jenkyns —

“A gentleman, my dear, who wants to know if you would see him.”

“Is it? — it is not —” stammered out Miss Jessie — and got no farther.

“This is his card,” said Miss

Jenkyns, giving it to Miss Jessie; and while her head was bent over it, Miss Jenkyns went through a series of winks and odd faces to me, and formed her lips into a long sentence, of which, of course, I could not understand a word.

"May he come up?" asked Miss Jenkyns, at last.

"Oh, yes! certainly!" said Miss Jessie, as much as to say, this is your house, you may show any visitor where you like. She took up some knitting of Miss Matey's, and began to be very busy, though I could see how she trembled all over.

Miss Jenkyns rang the bell, and told the servant who answered it to show Major Campbell up-stairs; and, presently, in walked a tall, fine, frank-looking man of forty, or upwards. He shook hands with Miss Jessie; but he could not see her eyes, she kept them so fixed on the ground. Miss Jenkyns asked me if I would come and help her to tie up the preserves in the store-room; and, though Miss Jessie plucked at my gown, and even looked up at me with begging eye, I durst not refuse to go where Miss Jenkyns asked. Instead of tying up preserves in the store-room, however, we went to talk in the dining-room; and there Miss Jenkyns told me what Major Campbell had told her; — how he had served in the same regiment with Captain Brown, and had become acquainted with Miss Jessie, then a sweet-looking, blooming girl of eighteen; how the acquaintance had grown into

love, on his part, though it had been some years before he had spoken; how, on becoming possessed, through the will of an uncle, of a good estate in Scotland, he had offered, and been refused, though with so much agitation, and evident distress, that he was sure she was not indifferent to him; and how he had discovered that the obstacle was the fell disease which was, even then, too surely threatening her sister. She had mentioned that the surgeons foretold intense suffering; and there was no one but herself to nurse her poor Mary, or cheer and comfort her father during the time of illness. They had had long discussions; and, on her refusal to pledge herself to him as his wife, when all should be over, he had grown angry, and broken off entirely, and gone abroad, believing that she was a cold-hearted person, whom he would do well to forget. He had been travelling in the East, and was on his return home when, at Rome, he saw the account of Captain Brown's death in "Galignani."

Just then Miss Matey, who had been out all the morning, and had only lately returned to the house, burst in with a face of dismay and outraged propriety: —

"Oh, goodness me!" she said. "Caroline, there's a gentleman sitting in the drawing-room, with his arm round Miss Jessie's waist!" Miss Matey's eyes looked large with terror.

Miss Jenkyns snubbed her down in an instant: —

"The most proper place in the world for his arm to be in. Go away, Matilda, and mind your own business." This from her sister, who had hitherto been a model of feminine decorum, was a blow for poor Miss Matey, and with a double shock she left the room.

The last time I ever saw poor Miss Jenkyns was many years after this. Mrs. Campbell had kept up a warm and affectionate intercourse with all at Cranford. Miss Jenkyns, Miss Matey, and Miss Pole had all been to visit her, and returned with wonderful accounts of her house, her husband, her dress, and her looks. For, with happiness, something of her early bloom returned; she had been a year or two younger than we had taken her for. Her eyes were always lovely, and, as Mrs. Campbell, her dimples were not out of place. At the time to which I have referred, when I last saw Miss Jenkyns, that lady was old and feeble, and had lost something of her strong mind. Little Flora Campbell was staying with the Misses Jenkyns, and when I came in she was reading aloud to Miss Jenkyns, who lay feeble and changed on the sofa. Flora put down the Rambler when I came in.

"Ah!" said Miss Jenkyns, "you find me changed, my dear. I can't see as I used to do. If Flora were not here to read to me, I hardly know how I should get through the day. Did you ever read the Rambler? It's a wonderful book — wonderful! and the most

improving reading for Flora" — (which I dare say it would have been if she could have read half the words without spelling, and could have understood the meaning of a third) — "better than that strange old book, with the queer name, poor Captain Brown was killed for reading — that book by Mr. Hood, you know — Hood — Admiral Hood; when I was a girl; but that's a long time ago, — I wore a cloak with a red Hood" — she babbled on long enough for Flora to get a good long spell at "Miss Kilmansegg and her Golden Leg," which Miss Matey had left on the table.

Poor, dear Miss Jenkyns! Cranford is Man-less now.

THE "MERCHANT SEAMAN'S FUND."

IN an article which we published, on the occasion of the agitation caused by the "Mercantile Marine Act," we had to congratulate the public on one point at all events; — the evident tendency in our modern legislation to make the management of our maritime affairs a subject of paramount consideration. We remarked on the negligent and unsatisfactory state of the relations between our Government and our seamen; hailing this new Act (though without approving all its details) as full of hope for the future. We have now to call attention to the "Merchant Seaman's Fund" — a great nautical institution of

the country; which, after long mismanagement, has at length, by an Act of the present year, been sentenced to be "wound-up." It is a little too bad that such an institution, in such a naval country, should share the fate of the West Diddlesex, and the Gibleton Junction. Let us glance at the circumstances; availing ourselves of some important documents which have fallen into our hands.

By the "Greenwich Hospital" Act of the seventh and eighth of William the Third, all seamen were required to subscribe sixpence a month to it. Of course, as this Hospital only benefited very partially *mercantile* seamen, considerable complaints arose; and in 1747 it was resolved by various ship-owners and merchants to found an institution for the benefit of that class, also, of a similar character. Accordingly, the twentieth of George the Second was passed, incorporating the Society, known as the "Merchant Seaman's Fund;" authorising the erection of a Hospital for "sick, maimed, and disabled mariners;" the granting of relief to such seamen by pensions or gratuities, and to the orphans and widows of such as were "killed, slain, or drowned." It was also granted to all outports in England and Wales to form separate corporate bodies, with all the privileges conferred by the Act on the Society in London; such bodies having exclusive control over their funds, and being thus separate and independent.

The Act determined that the necessary fund should be raised in the following manner: by the payment to the Society of one shilling from every captain, and of sixpence from every seaman in the Merchant Service, while in employment. These payments were enforced by penalties. The Act also determined that the seaman was to be relieved out of the fund of that port to which he had most contributed during his last five years' service at sea. And it empowered the Society to appoint officers for the collection of the dues.

That this plan started well, and was brought forward in perfect honesty, seems clear enough. The ship-owners and merchants subscribed to carry on the management, — subscribed, likewise, in seasons of distress. The institution seems, in the first instance, to have been considered, indeed, in great measure a charitable one. But the proper view of it is as a Maritime Poor Law, or rather an Assurance Society enforced by law. The payment was essentially a tax, of course; and if ever a society ought to have done what it pretended, this was just the one. The duty was to relieve; but to relieve men from their own funds, and from funds, too, raised by the order of an Act of Parliament.

The history of the Society cannot be accurately traced; for the books were destroyed by the fire at the Royal Exchange, in 1833. One thing is perfectly clear, that the hospital contemplated by the

Act was never erected. Yet the institution, on the whole, seems to have been tolerably satisfactory, till within the last thirty years. No one can accuse seamen generally of being an agitating class. They went on paying away — paying to the Fund — paying to Greenwich Hospital; and, we will be bound to say, not knowing, in hundreds of instances, why they were paying, or what they were paying for.

Between 1820 and 1830 complaints began to be made. A dim growling gradually arose from port to port. Jack slowly awoke to the fact that the pensions were very small — which seemed odd; that he was forced to pay a compulsory tax for an uncertain pension, which seemed odder still; and that he had, all this while, been paying sixpence to Greenwich Hospital, which he had no just reason for paying. Jack, we say, began to overhaul this business with some surprise.

An "agitation" began — or, to speak more appropriately, there was a "bit of a breeze" — which resulted in the passing of the Act of the fourth and fifth of William the Fourth. This Act (firstly) transferred the unjust sixpence from Greenwich Hospital to the Merchant Seaman's Fund, and increased the payment of masters to two shillings a month; secondly, It made the Fund chargeable with the widows and children of sailors who had subscribed for twenty-one years, or who were receiving relief as "worn-out" at the time of their death. It likewise enabled

masters of "coasters" to compound for voyage-payments by taking half-yearly ones instead. It likewise extended the Society's operations to Scotland and Ireland.

This Act likewise did something else. It turned out a complete failure, and gave a death-blow to the Society which it was intended to reform. The clause throwing the widows and children on the Fund, increased the number of claimants, in a ratio quite disproportionate to the increased amount from the Greenwich Hospital sixpence. While it ordered the local trustees to send reports of their accounts to the London Corporation, it gave that body no power to examine them. Powerless members were supposed to rule irresponsible trustees. Irresponsible trustees sent up incomplete accounts; and the whole were "shot" into Parliament just as they came.

So much for this Act of the fourth and fifth of William the Fourth. Let us glance at the evils to which this unfortunate Fund gradually became exposed.

One great evil clearly discernible by any person of common sense, arose from the relation of the "out-ports" to the London Board. Abuses of "centralisation," and "every vilage its own bungler" — theorists might turn a glance here with advantage. It seems that out of one hundred and nineteen ports, only forty-six were managed by the London Corporation, leaving seventy-three to "independent trustees," appoint-

ing their "own officers," &c., &c. The evidence on the Committee of Inquiry into the matter, in 1840, evolved the fact that there was *no restriction as to investment of Trust Funds*. So, at one place money was lent to banks which failed; at another, to harbour securities and turnpike-roads; one witness had a hazy recollection that they "divided the surplus balance among them," and so forth. But here, from Report of that Committee, are the "evils" in brief: —

"First. — That at many of the out-ports, pensions are not regulated with regard to the peculiar circumstances of the applicant; length of service or total blindness not being taken into consideration, as all pensioners receive the same sum.

"Second. — That the returns to Parliament from the Merchant Seamen's Corporation are inaccurate and imperfect.

"Third. — That the accumulated balances have not, in many instances, been invested in Parliamentary securities, as directed by the ninth section of the original Act, and fourth section of the present Act, but lent on bonds of corporations of public companies, or lodged in private banks.

"Fourth. — That the method of paying pensions at the out-ports is very irregular; at some they are paid half-yearly, at others quarterly, monthly, or weekly.

"Fifth. — That there is not any control over the trustees at the out-ports, who distribute the money in such portions as they

think fit, and some of whom dispose of the balances according to their own pleasure.

"Sixth. — That, with the exception of a comparatively trifling sum, the accumulated balances arise from the savings of duty money contributed by the seamen themselves, although an opinion prevailed that those sums arose principally from legacies and donations."

(The words in italics show clearly enough that the "pensions" are no matter of charity, but of right.)

Of course, such "evils" as these could not exist without the most lamentable consequences; and the reader will not be surprised to learn, that "inequality of pensions" was the 'crying evil of the whole. The "disparity of the pensions," we learn, from a trustworthy source, had long been very great. But, perhaps, a few figures, drawn from Parliamentary documents, will best illustrate *this* side of affairs: —

NAME OF PORT.	Average rate of Pension in 1843.		
	£	s.	d.
Belfast	7	10	0
Liverpool	7	0	0
Dundee	6	0	0
Bristol	6	0	0
London	4	8	0
Hull	2	12	0
Montrose	2	10	0
Leith	2	2	0
Newcastle	1	16	0

This disparity is, clearly, remarkable enough; and arises, in great measure, from a radical defect in the system; viz., the rule making the pension payable out

of the seaman's last place of service. For, of course, a seaman may have served the best years of his life in a rich port, yet have to draw his pension in one where trade is declining. The poor fellow who settles down in a quiet place on the coast suffers accordingly. All this arises from the multiplication of local boards — an evil not so formidable when the original Act was passed, and when the intention was to found an hospital where every seaman had a right to claim admission.

We alluded to the provision by the wretched Act, above, for giving pensions to widows and orphans, in a way not contemplated by the founders of the institution. The result of that measure (we quote from a Report of 1848) showed, that in the London Corporation Fund, more than "one-half," and in the funds of the out-ports, nearly "three-fourths," went to that class. **INSOLVENCY** was the natural result of a fund managed as we have seen; — a result happily aided by a regulation which "abolished the contributions of apprentices."

We have now to view this fund — fund, a century old; made by a great nation for the most national of purposes; reduced to the state of the West Diddlesex and the Gibleton Junction. It is not a pleasant thing to have to exhibit a balance-sheet, showing the dishonour of a nation, nor to contemplate such a picture as our friend Britannia, trident in hand, before Mr. Charles Philips, the

Commissioner. But here are some figures, showing the state of the funds, in respect to existing pensions, 31st of December, 1849.

LIABILITIES AND ASSETS.

Pensions granted in 1849	£60,069	14	9
Present value of ditto . . .	£551,294	9	5
Capital value of yearly interest on investments at Twenty- five years' purchase	179,792	6	0
Balance against the Fund	£371,502	3	5

To which (as we learn) there is a doubtful set-off, erroneously calculated to be twenty-nine thousand four hundred and one pounds and five-pence "in hand!"

In detail, the funds, up to the above date, were in an equally melancholy plight. Liverpool had a hostile balance of twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight pounds, eight shillings, and four-pence, and "no cash in hand," the ports of Clyde were almost as badly off; Newcastle and Hull "tarred with the same brush."

It would be quite impossible to detail here all the hubbub which the last few years have produced on this subject — how meetings were held, and letters written about it. A couple of volumes of "Household Words" might be filled if we descended to *minutiæ*. But the reader has seen what Mr. Carlyle would call the "heart of the matter," and possibly agrees with our sentiments with regard to it.

An Act, the fourteenth and fifteenth of Victoria, chapter one hundred and two, bearing date 8th August, 1851, was passed for

"winding-up" the concern; and the *first* naval nation in the world is now the *only* one which possesses no organisation for providing for its worn-out seamen. In France a per-centage is charged on all mariners; in America a direct payment of twenty cents per month is exacted from each merchant seaman's wages. In each of these countries the Merchant Seaman's Fund is believed to be rich.

The winding-up is now proceeding under the direction of the Board of Trade, and by the means of the machinery of that "Mercantile Marine Act," the provisions of which we explained at some length in Vol. VII. page 72 on the "Blue-jacket Agitation," previously alluded to. An "option" remains to sailors to continue subscribing, and so keep up their claims; but the best judges hope little from this. Sailors must be legislated for, as sailors — their character, wants, habits, position, taken into account. If this is kept in view, the Board of Trade may by its new machinery organise some plan for providing for the old age of our seamen worthy of the country — and so help to efface the memory of the blundering and imbecile system just come to a close. By-and-by, let us hope there will be no need for an old sailor to —

"Shoulder his crutch, and show how tars are done!"

A CHILD'S PRAYER.

THE day is gone, the night is come,
The night for quiet rest:
And every little bird has flown
Home to its downy nest.

The robin was the last to go.
Upon the leafless bough
He sang his evening hymn to God,
And he is silent now.

The bee is hushed within the hive
Shut is the daisy's eye;
The stars alone are peeping forth
From out the darkened sky.

No, not the stars alone; for God
Has heard what I have said:
His eye looks on His little child,
Kneeling beside its bed.

He kindly hears me thank him now
For all that he has given,
For friends, and books, and clothes, and
food;
But most of all for Heaven,

Where I shall go when I am dead,
If truly I do right;
Where I shall meet all those I love,
As Angels pure and bright.

HOUSEHOLD CRIME.

WE have long resisted the idea of classing arsenic among our household articles, because its domestic use has been, till lately, comparatively limited; but the dreadful frequency of the cases of poisoning which have occurred during the last twelve months, has at length proved too strong for us to refrain from doing so. The ease with which poison can be procured, and the perfect facility with which it can be administered, in small doses, so as frequently almost to defy detection, as displayed in recent cases of poison-

ing, ought to awaken the public to a demand for the absolute enforcement of legislative regulations for the sale of all such drugs and deadly ingredients.

It would appear that the crime of murder by means of poison — and more particularly of slow poison, or poison administered in very small doses from time to time — admits more readily of a fiendish sophistication in the mind of the perpetrator than any other form by which murder is committed. No violence is used; the destroyers can stop short of the final dose which kills, “if they choose;” and, if the victim dies some little time after, it is pretended that it is a broken constitution that has given way. If they are resolute for killing, as they mostly are, and look the fact in the face, still it seems by no means so regular a murder as a blow or a stab, which leaves marks of blood and horror; besides, poison shields the administrator from detection. Of the prolonged sickness and anguish of the victims, no account is taken; the perpetrators think only of themselves, and how the manner of the death affects their own safety. The great numerical preponderance of murders by means of poison over every other means of destruction — at least, in England — leads one to conclusions like the above; while the facility with which deadly drugs can be procured, even in our smallest towns and villages, gives an additional impulse to this form of crime.

A thin, respectable-looking man, in spectacles, with dark hair and whiskers, and wearing a long brown coat, calls at a chemist's shop in a small country town one morning, and asks for an ounce of arsenic to kill rats. He says his cat has just died of old age. He receives the ounce, and departs. He has a design to poison his wife, her mother, or a man to whom he owes money, by small doses from time to time; and he has now got a stock in trade for the carrying out of his intentions.

Sometimes the poison is purchased by a third party, who is made to promise secrecy, or is deceived as to the purpose to which it is to be applied. Having obtained the poison by these means, much caution in administering it is not thought necessary, and the process is not tedious. One day a young man, known in the neighbourhood, purchased some arsenic of a chemist at Eastwood, near Nottingham, on a Sunday morning. It was about the beginning of the month. On the 13th he purchased a similar quantity of another chemist. On the 20th of the next month, a man named John Barber, who had been unwell six or seven weeks, suddenly died. The young man who purchased the arsenic was the brother of Mrs. Barber. Suspicion was excited; and, to Mrs. Barber's great surprise, she was arrested, together with a man named Ingram, a paramour, and they were both committed for wil-

ful murder. She had fancied that by sending her brother for the arsenic, nobody would think of her in the matter.

The case of Mrs. Cage was of a similar kind. Mrs. Cage and her husband lived on the worst terms. They were continually quarrelling. One day he was taken very ill, and died almost immediately. The body was placed in a coffin, and was on its way to the burial-ground, when somebody suggested to the clergyman that there were very strong suspicions as to the cause of the man's death. The clergyman, therefore, postponed the interment, and a coroner's inquest was called. The examination and evidence of two medical gentlemen proved that arsenic had been administered; and it then came to light that Mrs. Cage had employed a woman to go to the chemist's, and purchase a pennyworth of arsenic — "as she did not wish to be seen in it."

Mrs. Hathway, landlady of the Fox beer-house, in the little quiet village of Chipping Sudbury, is said to have been a fine young woman, considerably younger than her husband, and very respectably connected. At the time of her marriage, Hathway had a fortune with her of several hundred pounds, nearly the whole of which he soon afterwards squandered in various disreputable ways, more especially with a girl named Carey, who had formerly been his servant. Mrs. Hathway was taken ill, and died suddenly. Suspicions having been

excited, a *post-mortem* examination takes place, and several grains of arsenic are found in the stomach. From the evidence given at the inquest, it appeared that the victim had been very unhappy from her husband's bad treatment; and a short time before her death, as though by some instinct or misgiving, she expressed a fear that "the set" her husband was connected with, would murder her.

Several children died at Clavering, in Essex, under a strong presumption that they had been poisoned. Some time afterwards, a woman, named Sarah Chesham, was accused of having administered arsenic to her husband, was tried, and found guilty of the murder. She denied it, however, to the very last, in the most determined manner — but not in a way that looked like the protestations of innocence. On leaving her cell, for execution — which she at first refused to do, until she was told she would be carried there — she repeated her previous assertions. Her behaviour, in steadily refusing to move out of her cell, either for exercise or devotion, had a most self-willed and dogged appearance, not in the least resembling the conduct of one who felt herself the unfortunate and wretched victim of false accusations and blind penal laws.

Mrs. Dearlove, the wife of a wealthy farmer, residing at Gorefield, near Wisbeach, is troubled by the heavy morning slumbers of

Ann Averment, a maid-servant, who never rises at a proper time. One morning, Mrs. Dearlove, hoping to cure her, by a summary process of a kind by no means very uncommon, went up to her room, and finding her still asleep, threw some cold water over her. This did not answer the desired effect beyond the moment; and, a few days afterwards, Mrs. Dearlove again went up-stairs, and finding Ann Averment still in bed, suddenly pulled the bed-clothes off. In the course of the day the girl was heard to say she would find some means of vengeance upon her mistress. It so happened that Mrs. Dearlove dined alone the same day, her husband not having returned from Wisbeach cattle-market, and her daughter being away from home on a visit. She had not commenced dinner above three minutes when she complained of a strange taste in the food, and was presently taken very ill. A thunderstorm had occurred during the last half-hour, so that Mr. Dearlove, who was on his way home to dinner, was obliged to take shelter under some trees, and the delay saved his life. When he returned, he found his wife speechless and almost insensible, and in two hours after she had eaten of the food, she died in dreadful agonies. Ann Averment had not purchased any poison in the neighbourhood, nor was any found in her possession; but Mr. Dearlove kept arsenic on the premises. He used it in preparing his seed wheat, and kept a

quantity in an iron pot, slung up for safety by a cord to the roof of a barn. He now recollected that, a few days ago, he had found the iron pot on the floor of the barn: he did not notice if any had been taken out of it, as he naturally supposed it had fallen down. Here, then, was a case for very strong suspicion against Ann Averment; but so utterly deficient was the evidence, that even on the adjourned inquest, the jury returned a verdict of "Wilful Murder against some person or persons unknown." Subsequently, on the examination of Ann Averment by the magistrates, the proceedings were several times adjourned, and it was only on the tenth day from the first examination that they could decide upon sending the accused for trial.

The reader will, of course, understand that we are far from meaning to blame the slowness to decide as to guilt in these cases, and the necessity there is of obtaining clear and close evidence of the crime. Our object is to show how extremely difficult it is, in most cases, to obtain such evidence, owing to the facility with which poison can be obtained, and the secrecy with which it can be administered. The latter circumstance should certainly cause some very stringent measures to be adopted with regard to the means of procuring poison, — and also against its being left openly within the reach of anybody.

Ellen Mitts and Mary Ann Bancroft, two infants, the first two

years and three months old, the latter only eleven months, died suddenly (in May last) at Haigh, near Ashton, in Cheshire. They had eaten some porridge; were taken ill immediately, and died soon after. Suspicion being excited, a constable took up the matter, and insisted on having the porridge-pot examined. But it had been so thoroughly cleaned, that nothing could be seen. Eventually, a *post-mortem* examination of the children's bodies took place, when their death was clearly traced to arsenic having been mixed with their food. Burial-club money was fully believed to be the incentive to the foul and unnatural crime. But more conclusive evidence was adduced, in the case of the Waddingtons, who poisoned Mary Hardy — a verdict of Wilful Murder having been found by the coroner's jury against James Waddington, her stepfather, and Ann Waddington, her mother. The jury came to the opinion that they poisoned the poor girl for the sake of seven pounds due from a burial-club. They received the money on the day of her death.

Of the carelessness with which poison is left open to all hands in so many houses, and of the ignorant heedlessness which exists among the mass of the people in respect of its danger, there are innumerable instances. At Southwark, the other day, Joseph Nye was apprehended on the charge of wilfully administering poison to Ann Gadding. When taken into custody, he at once admitted it, — saying, "Oh, it was only done for a lark! — there were others in the room when it was done — *no harm* was intended!" A few weeks ago an inquest was held on a man named Linkon, a bird-stuffer, of Seven Dials, who returned home a few days before, very ill from the effects of poison. He said shortly before he died, that he had put poison on a piece of bread-and-butter, to kill mice, and had eaten it himself by mistake. He told them the poison he had used was arsenic, "but only as much as would cover a sixpence." It was conjectured from this reply, that possibly he had been very hungry at the moment, and thought so small a portion — only enough to kill a mouse — would not hurt him. But the top of all these instances of incorrigible carelessness is that of the Page family, at Stowe Bardolph, in Norfolk, in March of last year. Some sugar was used at breakfast, which instantly made Mr. Page feel ill, and excited his suspicion as to some poison having by chance got into it. So the sugar was economically reserved for puddings! A pudding — as if to test it at once — was made the same day; and the medical gentleman who attended the family — as if to make sure of prompt assistance, should any little unpleasantness occur — was invited to join them at dinner. He came; and there sat down to table with him, Mr. and Mrs. Page, their son, Mr. Page's two

sisters, and a governess. All eat of this excellent and thrifty pudding, together with four servants in the kitchen. Every one of them was taken ill, and displayed the manifest symptoms of having been poisoned. Of the services of the medical gentleman which Mr. Page thought would be so handy, in *case* anybody felt a little uncomfortable, they were utterly defeated, as he had hurried home, feeling very unwell himself, and was quite unable to return when they sent for him. Mr. Page and his son died in the course of the night; the rest, our note of the occurrence says, "were likely to recover."

Dr. A. S. Taylor tells us, in his "Medical Jurisprudence," that in the years 1837-8, there were no less than one hundred and eighty-five cases of poisoning, in England, by arsenic alone! Of these the greater number were fatal cases of murder and suicide. We have not seen any statistics of the last year or two, but we certainly think the number must have increased with us. On the continent, there occurs, now and then, some great and striking atrocity of poisoning — as in the case of Madame Laffarge, and more recently of Count Bocarmé — which from the peculiarity of the circumstances or position of the criminals, produces a great effect; but we fear that with us, there is a numerical amount which far exceeds that of any other country.

It is clear, that the "favourite" poison with us is arsenic. Some-

times we hear of a deadly oil or acid being used by persons of more education than the majority; but our common means of destruction is certainly the rat's poison — arsenic. Why is this chosen? Is it because people are not aware of any other, or that because it is used in some household operations, it is the first that occurs? Do not people — we will not say reflect — do they not know, or have they no sort of conception as to the horrible agonies, whether slow or rapid in result, which cause death by the agency of arsenic? We will tell them (on medical authority) what to expect.

The immediate action of arsenic when swallowed, is to produce, from its acrid qualities, a violent inflammation of the internal lining (or membrane) of the stomach and bowels. The gullet, stomach, and bowels, which form in reality one continuous tube (called the alimentary canal), are lined within by a soft, velvety membrane, which is very plentifully supplied with blood-vessels. When, therefore, the arsenic is introduced, it irritates this internal coat, and, by causing an excess of blood to flow to the parts, and great nervous irritation, it produces inflammation. This inflammation extends from the inner coat of the stomach and bowels to the next, called the muscular coat, and the result is, that the inflammation is accompanied by the most violent spasms of the muscular coat, which cause the

most intense agony. The consequence of this is violent retching and vomiting; sometimes other exhausting distresses at the same time; and the symptoms of poisoning by arsenic are now very similar to those of Asiatic cholera. But the arsenic is not got rid of by these efforts. Inflammation, no remedies can control, proceeds, and the inner membrane (the mucous) becomes softened, and disappears in large patches. Familiarly speaking, the coats of the stomach are said to be corroded — to be eaten away — and, in reality, inflammation destroys the continuity of the membrane, which becomes disorganised. The sufferer experiences faintings, intense sickness, diarrhœa, violent spasms, sense of pressure, a choking in the throat, and a burning thirst, which no drinking can allay. In short, to use the words of Dr. A. S. Taylor, the sufferer who has taken arsenic, has pangs and tortures as of “a fire burning within his body.”* And with these excruciating, pains when finally exhausted, he dies.

We do not forget that arsenic, like other virulent poisons, is a valuable medicine, if properly administered by the hands of the scientific practitioner; so true it is, that medicines differ from poisons, only in their doses and application. But we must at the same time repeat our conviction, that a due enforcement of legal

regulations should be exercised as to their sale. We say “enforcement” advisedly, because there are some very judicious regulations on the subject — which nobody attends to. We may add, that few know them. The Sale of Arsenic Bill was passed in the last Session of Parliament, and it provides that no arsenic shall be sold, unless in the presence of a witness; that all sales shall be entered in a book, to be signed by the person buying it, and that no sale of poison shall be made to a person unknown. The Act further provides that no arsenic shall be sold without being mixed with soot or indigo, and the penalty for a violation of these enactments is twenty pounds. Such are the careful provisions of the Act. To what end were they made? Merely to pacify some troublesome member; but with no notion of being carried out as a thing “in earnest?” Was it only one of the very numerous instances of a game at play in legislating? Who ever saw black or sooty arsenic? — Who ever saw blue arsenic? As it is prohibited by law for any one to sell gunpowder after dark, so we would prohibit any one from selling poison “in the dark.” The purchaser should be well known as one who can be found, if wanted; and the other provisions of the Act should be rendered efficient, and in earnest, instead of being left comparatively unknown, and no more regarded than if they did not exist.

* Medical Jurisprudence, by A. S. Taylor, F. R. S., Chap. X. Third Edition. Churchill, 1849.

The whole gist of this ignorance

and carelessness is finely displayed in the recent case of Rollinson. On the 27th ult., William Rollinson, a man at the advanced age of eighty years, was examined at the Petty Sessions in Clare, on the twofold charge of murdering Ann Cowell, a married woman, by administering arsenic, and of attempting to murder his daughter-in-law, Mary Rollinson, by the same means. The latter, who escaped, appears to have been the only intended victim — (we have previously noticed the indifference poisoners often exhibit as to “killing their way” to the intended victim); and the apparent motive for destroying her life was the desire to possess himself of some property bequeathed to her by his son. She was on the eve of marrying a labourer, named Jarman, whose wife she now is; and the old man objected to the marriage, and quarrelled with her, on her refusing either to give it up, or to make over the goods to him. His attempts to poison her are supposed to have commenced so long ago as the 17th of August. She fell ill suddenly and unaccountably on the day last named, but recovered to some extent, and a week afterwards partook of a black currant pudding, of her own making, when she again became sick, and showed other symptoms of having taken poison. The day following, her niece and two or three children ate some of the pudding, and were seized with vomiting and violent burning in the throat;

but they all recovered, and no suspicion was excited. Mary Rollinson continued to live with the accused, but was hardly ever free from illness; and towards the end of the same month she requested her sister, Ann Cowell, to come and attend her while on her sick-bed. The sister did so; and having taken some broth, prepared by Mary Rollinson for herself, she immediately became seriously ill, and was conveyed home, where she died in a few hours. The suddenness of her death caused a coroner's inquest to be held, and a *post-mortem* examination of the body was made by a surgeon of the neighbourhood, who gave it as his opinion that she had died of English cholera. The verdict of the jury was in accordance with this opinion, and so the newly-raised suspicions were dispelled. On the 2d of October, however, they were powerfully revived. Mary Rollinson had made four dumplings of her own flour, of which she herself, Charlotte Sparks (one of a family residing in the same house), and two children partook. All of them soon exhibited signs of illness, and a cat and dog, to whom one of the dumplings had been thrown, became violently sick also. The same surgeon was called in, and, distrusting his own chemical skill on this second instance, which had so bad an appearance, he sent a portion of the dumpling thrown to the dog and cat, and part of the flour of which it had been made, to a chemist at Cambridge,

who detected the presence of arsenic in both. The police then ascertained that the old man had been in the habit of purchasing arsenic in "ha'porths" and "pen'orths," at a druggist's shop in Great Thurlow. This important fact was proved by an aged and respectable-looking man, named White, who described himself as an assistant and kind of manager at the shop. His answers to the examining magistrate set the whole question of the ignorance of the late Sale of Arsenic Bill, or the contempt of it, in a very prominent light. Mr. Bevan, the magistrate — "When you sold him this ounce of arsenic (on the 21st or 22nd of August), did he state what he wanted it for?" Witness (somewhat coolly) — "No, really, I don't recollect; but it must have been something about the rats and mice." [Taking it for granted that the common rule-of-thumb answer was made; but it did not much matter!] Mr. Bevan — "Then you have not the slightest recollection about what he said, excepting that he must have talked of rats and mice?" Witness — "No, I don't recollect what he said; it is very likely it was about some mice; but I sold it him so often." Mr. Bevan — "Very often, perhaps?" Witness — "Yes, frequently." Mr. Bevan — "How many times?" Witness — "I can scarcely recollect." Mr. Bevan — "More than twelve times, probably?" Witness — "Yes, it may be twelve times; so I can't recollect what

was said every time." Mr. Bevan — "What were your instructions relative to the sale of arsenic; had you any from Mr. Daniels?" [The master of the shop.] Witness — "No, none in particular. Merely to write the word 'poison' upon the paper."

This case, alone, strongly calls for legislative restrictions on the sale of poisons.

CHIPS.

PORK INSURANCE.

A PIG in a picture is a pleasing object. The disregard in which he is said (not always truly) to hold Mr. Chadwick's precepts; his old brusque habits, and the flowing lines of his contour, recommend him to the painter; while his contempt for the usages of polite society keep him out of the pale of genteel circles.

This consideration leads us to the reflection that many things which the pencil of the artist transforms to the picturesque — as ragged, dirty children; squalid rooms; foul and dingy alleys — are, in their reality, altogether unpleasant objects.

We, therefore, offer no apology for bringing before the world, in as artistic a manner as our pen will permit, a certain pig, whose sty we have at this moment in our eye. This pig is the property of a worthy agricultural labourer, whom we shall call Reuben. Behold him, with his long, flapping

ears; his taper snout decorated with a metal ring; his slender pretensions to a tail; his popular trotters; and his broad, flat sides. He is a frisky fellow, with a certain good-humour; his grunt has more the sound of luxurious enjoyment than that of dissatisfaction. He pertinaciously grubs about after wash; yet, in the absence of that luxury, he contentedly consumes turnip-tops. But Reuben's pig is no common pig. He is not of that class of pigs which ragged children hunt up and down London courts and alleys; he by no means lives from snout to gutter; only attracting the notice of their owners on the morning when the butcher's knife is ominously sharpened. No, Reuben's pig is a very comfortable pig; and, moreover, a pig that has excited considerable attention. A common pig lives his few years; dies, and subsides into the obscurity of ham and bacon; but Reuben's pig has a certain tenure of existence, and, when he dies, he will cause considerable commotion to a grave society of men. His health has been inquired into by a band of exact arithmeticians; the chances of his career have been computed to a fraction; and his social habits are narrowly watched. It is essential for the well-being of others, that he should be a discreet and well-behaved pig. He must eschew the irregularities of low porcine life, and feel the dignity of his station, for he is member of a flourishing Pig Insurance Society.

Solemn meetings are held periodically, to inquire into his condition and prospects; he is the subject of a neat little book of printed rules and regulations; and rumours of his death would cast a gloom over an otherwise happy assembly. Therefore, Reuben's pig is not an ordinary, every-day pig, to be passed carelessly by, without thought or notice. He is provided for during his life; and his death insures to his owner the receipt of a sum sufficient to purchase a successor. The last report of the society to which Reuben's pig belongs, showed that three pounds, five shillings, and threepence had been paid within the half-year for the losses of pigs, and twelve shillings and sixpence for printing laws, leaving in the treasurer's hands a balance of two pounds, three shillings, and sixpence. Anybody who doubts the dignity to which Reuben's pig has arrived, had better address a letter to the secretary of the Warsop (Warsop is in Nottinghamshire) Pig Insurance Society at once; whereupon he will receive a full confirmation of these present assertions.

To the cottager, with fifteen shillings per week, and six healthy children, all hearty as lions, the pig of the family is an important member of the household. Reuben's pig certainly represents all the hopes and chances Reuben has of giving his household occasional treats of animal food. The happiness of the family on New Year's Day next depends mate-

rially upon the development of that leg which Reuben's pig is now carelessly rubbing against the door-post, with the obvious hope of reducing a little local irritation. Reuben may well lounge against the sty in the evening — when his day's hard work is over — and, puffing his smoke into the cool evening air, anxiously contemplate the proportions of its tenant. He remembers with a shudder how a year or two ago, when provisions were uncommonly dear, and when work was scarce, his pig suddenly died, and was unfit for anything but to fill a hole in the garden. That was, for a time, simply ruin. Reuben had no money to buy another pig, and terrible days and nights ensued. He remembers how an earnest man came one evening to his gate; and, in a mild kind voice began to talk with him about his loss. He remembers that at first he was confused by the stranger's words, and that he was about to turn away and to give up the conversation as too deep for his comprehension, when suddenly he caught a glimmer of the truth. It was a very faint glimmer at first, but it soon grew brighter.

"You have lost your pig," the stranger said, "and you are sorely distressed at the loss — it has overwhelmed you; but your neighbours have not lost their pigs, so that they are in a comparatively prosperous condition, and should help you in your need; while you should promise to help them at a future time when any of them

require your assistance. You see, all these things are equitably arranged by striking averages. There are sixty pigs in your village. Taking the experience of the last forty years, one out of the sixty has either died of disease, or been rendered by it unfit for consumption as human food. One year you have been the unfortunate loser; another year the calamity will fall upon your next-door neighbour. To each of you the loss has been a calamity. Now, would you not willingly pay three-pence once a year to insure yourself against the loss of your pig for the future? For by the payment of that sum by the sixty owners of pigs in your village, a fund will be provided to supply the place of the pig that is annually lost."

These were the words of the stranger, as he leaned over Reuben's gate, to condole with him upon his loss. They explained the principles, not only of porcine, but of human life assurance. Reuben was convinced, and now annually insures the lives of his pigs. He still finds it difficult, however, to make all his neighbours understand the advantages of the Pig Insurance Society; but that is not much to be wondered at, when people who pretend to be particularly sagacious on all points, are slow to avail themselves of the advantages of a Man Insurance Society.

GETTING UP A PANTOMIME.

CHRISTMAS is coming. Cold weather, snow in the streets, mince-pies, and our little boys and girls home for the holidays. Kind-hearted people's donations for the poor-boxes. Turkeys from the country; Goose Clubs in town; plums and candied citron in the windows of the grocers' shops; hot elder-wine; snap-dragon; hunt the slipper; and the butcher's and baker's quarterly bills. The great anniversary of humanity gives signs of its approach, and with it the joyfulness, and unbending, and unstarching of white neckcloths, and genial charity, and genial hand-shaking and good-fellowship, which, once a-year at least, dispel the fog of caste and prejudice in this land of England. Christmas is coming, and, in his jovial train, come also the Pantomimes.

Goodness! though we know them all by heart, how we love those same Pantomimes still! Though we have seen the same Clowns steal the same sausages, and have been asked by the Pantaloon "how we were to-morrow?" for years and years, how we delight in the same Clown and Pantaloon still! There can't be anything æsthetic in a pantomime—it must be deficient in the "unities;" it has no "epopœa," or anything in the shape of dramatic property, connected with it; yet it must have something good about it to make us roar at the old, old jokes,

and wonder at the old tricks, and be delighted with the old spangled fairies, and coloured fires. Perhaps there may be something in the festive season, something contagious in the wintry jollity of the year, that causes us, churchwardens, householders, hard men of business, that we may be, forget parochial squabbles, taxes and water-rates, discount and agiotage, for hours, and enter, heart and soul, into participation and appreciation of the mysteries of "Harlequin Fee-fo-fum; or the Enchanted Fairy of the Island of Abracadabra." Possibly there may be something in the shrill laughter, the ecstatic hand-clapping, the shouts of triumphant laughter of the little children, yonder. It may be, after all, that the sausages, and the spangles, the tricks and coloured fires of Harlequin Fee-fo-fum may strike some long-forgotten chords; rummage up long-hidden sympathies; wake up kindly feelings and remembrances of things that were, ere parochial squabbles, water-rates, and discount had being; when we too were little children; when our jackets buttoned over our trousers, and we wore frills round our necks, and long blue sashes round our waists. Else why should something like a wateriness in the eye, and a huskiness in the throat (not sorrowful, though) come over us, amid the most excruciatingly comic portion of the "comic business?" Else why should the lights, and the music, the children's laughter, and the

spangled fairies conjure up that mind-picture, half dim and half distinct, of *our* Christmases years ago; of "Magnall's Questions," and emancipation from the cane of grandmamma, who always kept sweet-stuff in her pockets; of Uncle William, who was never without a store of half-crowns wherewith to "tip" us; of poor Sister Gussey, who died; of the childish joys and griefs, the hopes and fears of Christmas, in the year eighteen hundred and —; never mind how many.

Hip, hip, hip! for the Pantomime, however! Exultingly watch the Clown through his nefarious career; roar at Jack-pudding tumbling; admire the paint on his face; marvel at the "halls of splendour" and "glittering coral caves of the Genius of the Sea," till midnight comes, and the green baize curtain rolls slowly down, and brown holland draperies cover the ormolu decorations of the boxes. Then, if you can spare half-an-hour, send the little children home to Brompton with the best of governesses, and tarry awhile with me while I discourse of what goes on behind that same green curtain, of what has gone on, before the Clown could steal his sausages, or the spangled Fairy change an oak into a magic temple, or the coloured fires light up the "Home of Beauty in the Lake of the Silver Swans." Let me, as briefly and succinctly as I can, endeavour to give you an idea of the immense labour, and industry, and perseverance — of the nice

ingenuity, and patient mechanical skill — of the various knowledge, necessary, nay, indispensable — ere Harlequin Fee-fo-fum can be put upon the stage; ere the green baize can rise, disclosing the coral caves of the Genius of the Sea. Let us put on the cap of Fortunio, and the stilts of Asmodeus; let us go back to when the pantomime was but an embryo of comicality, and, in its progress towards the glory of full-blown pantomimehood, watch the labours of the Ants behind the Baize — ants, without exaggeration; for, if ever there was a human ant-hill, the working department of a theatre is something of that sort.

And mere amusement — your mere enlightenment on a subject, of which my readers may possibly be ignorant, are not the sole objects I have in view. I do honestly think that the theatrical profession and its professors are somewhat calumniated; that people are rather too apt to call theatres sinks of iniquity and dens of depravity, and to set down all actors as a species of diverting vagabonds, who have acquired a knowledge of their calling without study, and exercise it without labour. I imagine, that if a little more were known of how hard-working, industrious, and persevering theatricals, as a body, generally are, — of what has to be done behind the scenes of a theatre, and how it is done for our amusement, — we should look upon the drama with a more favourable eye, and look upon even

poor Jack-pudding (when he has washed the paint off his face) with a little more charity and forbearance.

Fortunio-capped, then, we stand in the green room of the Theatre Royal, Hatton Garden, one bleak November morning, while the stage manager reads the manuscript of the opening to the new grand pantomime of Harlequin Fee-fo-fum. The dramatic performers — the pantomimists are not present at this reading, the lecture being preliminary, and intended for the sole behoof of the working ants of the theatrical ant-hill — the fighting ants will have another reading to themselves. This morning are assembled the scene-painter, an individual bespattered from head to foot with splashes of various colours, attired in a painted ragged blouse, a battered cap, and slipshod slippers. You would be rather surprised to see him turn out, when his work is over, dressed like a gentleman (as he is, and an accomplished gentleman to boot). Near him is the property-man, also painted and bespattered, and strongly perfumed with a mingled odour of glue and turpentine. Then there is the carpenter, who twirls a wide-awake hat between his fingers, and whose attire generally betrays an embroidery of shavings. The leader of the band is present. On the edge of a chair sits the author — not necessarily a seedy man, with long hair and a manuscript peeping out of his coat-pocket — but a well-to-do

looking gentleman, probably; with rather a nervous air just now, and wincing somewhat, as the droning voice of the stage manager gives utterance to his comic combinations, and his creamiest jokes are met with immovable stolidity from the persons present. Catch them laughing! The scene painter is thinking of "heavy sets" and "cut cloths," instead of quips and conundrums. The carpenter cogitates on "sinks" and "slides," "strikes" and "pulls." The property-man ponders ruefully on the immense number of comic masks to model, and coral branches to paint; while the master and mistress of the wardrobe, whom we have hitherto omitted to mention, mentally cast up the number of ells of glazed calico, silk, satin, and velvet required. Lastly, enthroned in awful magnificence in some dim corner, sits the management — a portly, port-wine-voiced management, may be, with a white hat, and a double eye-glass with a broad ribbon. This incarnation of theatrical power throws in an occasional "Good!" at which the author colours, and sings a mental pœan, varied by an ejaculation of "Can't be done!" — at which the dramatist winces dreadfully.

The reading over, a short, desultory conversation follows. It would be better, Mr. Brush, the painter, suggests, to make the first scene a "close in," and not a "sink." Mr. Tacks, the carpenter — machinist, we mean — intimates in a somewhat threatening manner, that he shall want a "power

of nails and screws;" while the master of the wardrobe repudiates, with respectful indignation, an economical suggestion of the management touching the renovation of some old ballet dresses by means of new spangles, and the propriety of cutting up an old crimson velvet curtain, used some years before, into costumes for the supernumeraries. As to the leader of the band, he is slowly humming over a very "Little Warbler" of popular airs, which he thinks he can introduce; while the stage manager, pencil in hand, fights amicably with the author as to the "cuts" necessary to make the pantomime read with greater smartness. All, however, agree that it will do; and to each working ant is delivered a "plot" of what he or she has to manufacture by a given time (generally a month or six weeks from the day of reading). Mr. Brush has a "plot" of so many pairs of flats and wings, so many "borders" and set pieces, so many cloths and backings. Mr. Tacks has a similar one, as it is his department to prepare the canvasses and machinery on which Mr. Brush subsequently paints. Mr. Tagg, the wardrobe keeper, is provided with a list of the fairies', demons', kings', guards', and slaves' costumes he is required to *confectionner*; and Mr. Rosin, the leader, is presented with a complete copy of the pantomime itself, in order that he may study its principal points, and arrange characteristic music for it. As for poor Mr. Gorget, the property-

man, he departs in a state of pitiable bewilderment, holding in his hand a portentous list of properties required, from regal crowns to red-hot pokers. He impetuously demands "How it's all to be done in a month?" Done, it will be, notwithstanding. The stage manager departs in a hurry (in which stage managers generally are, twenty hours out of the twenty-four), and, entrapping the Clown in the passage (who is an eccentric character of immense comic abilities, and distinguished for training all sorts of animals, from the goose which follows him like a dog, to a jackass-foal which resides in his sitting-room), enters into an animated pantomimic conversation with him, discoursing especially of the immense number of "bits of fat" for him (Clown) in the pantomime.

The author's name we need not mention; it will appear in the bill, as it has appeared in (and across) many bills, stamped and unstamped, before. When the officials have retired, he remains awhile with the management — the subject of conversation mainly relating to a piece of grey paper, addressed to Messrs. Coutts, Drummonds, or Childs.

For the next few days, though work has not actually commenced in all its vigour, great preparations are made. Forests of timber, so to speak, are brought in at the stage door. Also, bales of canvas, huge quantities of stuffs for the wardrobe; foil-paper, spangles and Dutch metal, generally,

Firkins of size, and barrels of whitening, arrive for Mr. Brush; hundred-weights of glue and gold-leaf for Mr. Gorget, not forgetting the "power of nails and screws" for Mr. Tacks. Another day, and the ants are all at work behind the baize for Harlequin Fee-fo-fum.

Fortunio's cap will stand us in good stead again, and we had better attach ourselves to the skirts of the stage manager, who is here, there, and everywhere, to see that the work is being properly proceeded with. The carpenters have been at work since six o'clock this nice winter morning; let us see how they are getting on after breakfast.

We cross the darkened stage, and, ascending a very narrow staircase at the back thereof, mount into the lower range of "flies." A mixture this of the between-decks of a ship, a rope-walk, and the old wood-work of the Chain-pier at Brighton. Here are windlasses, capstans, ropes, cables, chains, pulleys innumerable. Take care! or you will stumble across the species of winnowing-machine, used to imitate the noise of wind, and which is close to the large sheet of copper which makes the thunder. The tin cylinder, filled with peas, used for rain and hail, is down-stairs; but you may see the wires, or "travellers," used by "flying fairies," and the huge counter-weights and lines which work the curtain and act-drop. Up then, again, by a ladder, into range of flies, No. 2, where there are more pulleys, windlasses, and counter-weights, with bridges crossing the stage, and lines working the borders, and gas-pipes, with coloured screens, called "mediums," which are used to throw a lurid light of a moonlight on scenes of battles or conflagrations, where the employment of coloured fires is not desirable. Another ladder (a rope one this time) has still to be climbed: and now we find ourselves close to the roof of the theatre, and in the carpenter's shop.

Such a noise of sawing, and chopping, hammering, and chiselling! The shop is a large one, its size corresponding to the area of the stage beneath. Twenty or thirty men are at work, putting together the framework of "flats," and covering the framework itself with canvas. Some are constructing the long cylinders, or rollers, used for "drops," or "cloths;" while others, on their knees, are busily following with a hand-saw the outline of a rock, or tree, marked in red lead by the scene painter on profile (thin wood) required for a set piece. Mr. Tacks is in his glory, with his "power of nails and screws" around him. He pounces on the official immediately. He must have "more nails," more "hands;" spreading out his own emphatically. Give him "hands!" The stage manager pacifies and promises. Stand by, there, while four brawny carpenters rush from another portion of the "shop" with the "Pagoda of

Arabian Delights," dimly looming through canvas and whitewash!

A curious race of men are these theatrical carpenters. Some of them growl bits of Italian operas, or melodramatic music, as they work. They are full of traditional lore of the "Lane" and the "Garden" in days of yore. Probably their fathers and grandfathers were theatrical before them; for it is rare to find a carpenter of ordinary life at stage work, or *vice versâ*. Malignant members of the ordinary trade whisper even that their work never lasts, and is only fit for the ideal carpentry of a theatre. There is a legend, also, that a stage carpenter being employed once to make a coffin, constructed it after the Hamlet manner, and ornamented it with scroll-work. They preserve admirable discipline, and obey the master carpenter implicitly; but, work once over, and out of the theatre, he is no more than one of themselves, and takes beer with Tom or Bill, and the chair at their committee and sick club *réunions*, in a perfectly republican and fraternal manner. These men labour from six in the morning until six in the evening; and, probably, as Fee-fo-fum is a "heavy pantomime," from seven until the close of the performances. At night, when the gas battens below the flies are all lighted, the heat is somewhat oppressive: and, if you lie on your face on the floor, and gaze through the chinks of the planking, you will hear the music in the orchestra,

and catch an occasional glimpse of the performers on the stage beneath, marvellously foreshortened, and microscopically diminished. The morning we pay our visit, a rehearsal is going on below, and a hoarse command is wafted from the stage to "stop that hammering" while Marc Antony is pronouncing his oration over the dead body of Cæsar. The stage manager, of course, is now wanted down-stairs, and departs, with an oft-iterated injunction to "get on." We, too, must "get on" without him; which, still using Fortunio's invisibility, we will endeavour to do.

We enter another carpenter's shop, smaller, but on the same level, and occupying a space above the horse-shoe ceiling of the audience part of the theatre. A sort of martello of wood occupies the centre of this apartment, its summit going through the roof. This is at once the ventilator, and the "chandelier house" of the theatre. If we open a small door, we can descry, as our eyes become accustomed to the semi-darkness, that it is floored with iron, in ornamented scroll-work, and opening with a hinged trap. We can also see the ropes and pulleys, to which are suspended the great centre chandelier, and by which it is hauled up every Monday morning to be cleaned. More carpenters are busily at work, at bench and trestles, sawing, gluing, hammering. Hark! we hear a noise like an eight-day clock on a gigantic scale running down. They are

letting down a pair of flats in the painting-room. Let us see what they are about in the painting-room itself.

Pushing aside a door, for ever on the swing, we enter an apartment, somewhat narrow, if taken in comparison with its length, but very lofty. Half the roof, at least, is skylight. A longitudinal aperture in the flooring traverses the room close to the wall. This is the "cut," or groove, half a foot wide, and seventy feet in depth, perhaps, in which hangs a screen of wood-work, called a "frame." On this frame the scene to be painted is placed, and, by means of a counter-weight and a windlass, is worked up and down the cut, as the painter may require; the sky being thus as convenient to his hand, as the lowest stone or bit of foliage in the foreground. When the scene is finished, a signal is given to "stand clear" below, and a bar in the windlass being removed, the frame slides with immense celerity down the cut to the level of the stage. Here the carpenters remove the flats, or wings, or whatever else may have been painted, and the empty frame is wound up again into the painting-room. Sometimes, instead of a cut, a "bridge" is used. In this case the scene itself remains stationary, and the painter stands on a platform, which is wound up and down by a windlass as he may require it — a ladder being placed against the bridge if he wishes to descend without shifting the position of his plat-

form. When the scene is finished, a trap is opened in the floor, and the scene slung by ropes to the bottom. The "cut" and frame are, it is needless to say, most convenient, the artist being always able to contemplate the full effect of his work, and to provide himself with what colours, or sketches, he may need, without the trouble of ascending and descending the ladder.

Mr. Brush, more bespattered than ever, with a "double tie" brush in his hand, is knocking the colour about, bravely. Five or six good men and true, his assistants, are also employed on the scene he is painting — the fairy palace of Fee-fo-fum, perchance. One is seated at a table, with something very like the toy theatres of our younger days, on which we used to enact that wonderful "Miller and his Men," with the famous characters (always in one fierce attitude of triumphant defiance, we remember) of Mr. Park before him. It is, in reality, a model of the stage itself; and the little bits of pasteboard he is cutting out and pasting together form portions of a scene he is modelling "to scale" for the future guidance of the carpenter. Another is fluting columns with a thin brush called a "quill tool," and a long ruler, or "straight-edge." Different portions of the scene are allotted to different artists, according to their competence, from Mr. Brush, who finishes and touches up everything, down to the fustian-jacketed whitewasher, who is "priming"

or giving a preparatory coat of whiting and size to a pair of wings.

If you are at all curious to know how the brilliant scenes you see at night are painted, you may watch the whole process of a pair of flats growing into a beautiful picture, under Mr. Brush's experienced hands. First, the scene, well primed, and looking like a gigantic sheet of coarse cartridge paper on a stretcher, is placed on the frame; then, with a long pole, cleft at the end, and in which is stuck a piece of charcoal, Mr. Brush hastily scrawls (as it seems) the outline of the scene he is about to paint. Then, he and his assistants "draw in" a finished outline with a small brush and common ink, which, darkening as it dries, allows the outline to shine through the first layers of colour. Then, the white-washer "labourer," as he is technically called, is summoned to "lay in" the great masses of colour, sky, wall, foreground, &c., which he does with huge brushes. Then, the shadows are "picked in" by assistants, to whom enters speedily Mr. Brush, with a sketch in one hand and brushes in the other, and he finishes — finishes, too, with a delicacy of manipulation and nicety of touch which will rather surprise you — previously impressed as you may have been with an idea that scenes are painted with mops, and that scenic artists are a superior class of house-painters. Stay, here is the straight line of a cornice to be ruled from one part of the scene to the other, a space fifty feet wide, perhaps.

Two labourers, one at either end, hold a string tightly across where the desired line is to be. This string has been well rubbed with powdered charcoal, and, being held up in some part, for a moment, between the thumb and finger, and then smartly vibrated on to the canvas, again leaves a mark of black charcoal along the whole length of the line, which being followed by the brush and ink, serves for the guide line of the cornice. Again, the wall of that magnificent saloon has to be covered with an elaborate scroll-work pattern. Is all this outlined by the hand, think you? No; a sheet of brown paper, perforated with pin-holes with a portion of the desired pattern, is laid against the scene; the whole is then gently beaten with a worsted bag full of powdered charcoal, which, penetrating through the pin-holes, leaves a dotted outline, capable of repetition *ad infinitum* by shifting the pattern. This is called "pouncing." Then some of the outlines of decoration are "stencilled;" but for foliage and rocks, flowers and water, I need not tell you, my artistical friend, that the hand of Mr. Brush is the only pouncer and stenciller. For so grand a pantomime as "Fee-fo-fum," a scene will, probably, after artistic completion, be enriched with foil paper and Dutch metal. Admire the celerity with which these processes are effected. First, an assistant cuts the foil in narrow strips with a penknife; another catches them up like magic, and glues them;

another claps them on the canvas, and the scene is foiled. Then Mr. Brush advances with a pot, having a lamp beneath, filled with a composition of Burgundy pitch, rosin, glue, and bees-wax, called "mordant." With this and a camel-hair brush he delicately outlines the parts he wishes gilt. Half-a-dozen assistants rush forward with books of Dutch metal, and three-fourths of the scene are covered, in a trice, with squares of glittering dross. The superfluous particles are rubbed off with a dry brush, and, amid a very Danaëan shower of golden particles, the outlines of mordant, to which the metal has adhered, become gradually apparent in a glittering network.

All around this chamber of the arts are hung pounces and stencils, like the brown-paper patterns in a tailor's shop. There is a ledge running right round the room, on which is placed a long row of pots filled with the colours used, which are ground in water, and subsequently tempered with size, a huge cauldron of which is now simmering over the ample fireplace. The colour-grinder himself stands before a table, supporting an ample stone slab, on which, with a marble muller, he is grinding Dutch pink lustily. The painter's palette is not the oval one used by picture painters, but a downright four-legged table, the edges of which are divided into compartments, each holding its separate dab of colour, while the centre serves as a space whereon to mix

and graduate the tints. The white-washed walls are scrawled over with rough sketches and memoranda, in charcoal or red lead, while a choice engraving, here and there, a box of water colours, some delicate flowers in a glass, some velvet drapery pinned against the wall, hint that in this timber-roofed, unpapered, uncarpeted, size-and-whitewash-smelling workshop, there is Art as well as Industry.

Though it is only of late years, mind you, that scene-painters have been recognised as artists at all. They were called daubers, whitewashers, paper-hangers, by that class of artists to whom the velvet cap, the turn-down collars, and the ormolu frame, were as the air they breathed. These were the gentlemen who thought it beneath the dignity of art to make designs for wood engravers, to paint porcelain, to draw patterns for silk manufacturers. Gradually they found out that the scene-painters made better architects, landscape painters, professors of perspective, than they themselves did. Gradually they remembered that, in days gone by, such men as Salvator Rosa, Inigo Jones, and Philip de Loutherbourg were scene-painters; and that, in our own times, one Stanfield had not disdained size and whitewash, nor a certain Roberts thought it derogatory to wield the "double tie" brush. Scene-painting thenceforward looked up; and even the heavy portals of the Academy moved creakingly on their hinges

for the admittance of distinguished professors of scenic art.

We have been hindering Mr. Brush quite long enough, I think, even though we are invisible; so let us descend this crazy ladder, which leads from the painting-room down another flight of stairs. So: keep your hands out before you, and tread cautiously, for the management is chary of gas, and the place is pitch dark. Now, as I open this door, shade your eyes with your hand a moment, lest the sudden glare of light dazzle you.

This is the "property room." In this vast, long, low room, are manufactured the "properties"—all the stage furniture and paraphernalia required during the performance of a play. Look around you, and wonder. The walls and ceiling are hung, the floor and tables cumbered with properties:—Shylock's knife and scales, Ophelia's coffin, Paul Pry's umbrella, Macbeth's truncheon, the caldron of the Witches, Harlequin's bat, the sickle of Norma, Mambrino's helmet, swords, lanterns, banners, belts, hats, daggers, wooden sirloins of beef, Louis Quatorze chairs, papier-mâché goblets, pantomime masks, stage money, whips, spears, lutes, flasks of "rich burgundy," fruit, rattles, fish, plaster images, drums, cocked hats, spurs, and bugle-horns, are strewn about, without the slightest attempt at arrangement or classification. Tilted against the wall, on one end, is a four-legged banqueting table, very grand indeed,—white marble

top and golden legs. At this table will noble knights and ladies feast richly off wooden fowls and brown-paper pies, quaffing, meanwhile, deep potations of toast-and-water sherry, or, haply, golden goblets full of nothing at all. Some of the goblets, together with elaborate flasks of exhilarating emptiness, and dishes of rich fruit, more deceptive than Dead Sea apples (for they have not even got ashes inside them), are nailed to the festive board itself. On very great occasions the bowl is wreathed with cotton wool, and the viands smoke with a cloud of powdered lime. Dreadfully deceptive are these stage banquets and stage purses. The haughty Hospodar of Hungary drinks confusion to the Bold Bandit of Bulgaria in a liquorless cup, vainly thirsting, meanwhile, for a pint of mild porter from the adjacent hostelry. Deep are his retainers in the enjoyment of Warden pies and lusty capons, while their too often empty interiors cry dolorously for three penn'orth of cold boiled beef. Liberal is he also of broad florins, and purses of moidores, accidentally drawing, perchance, at the same time, a Lombardian debenture for his boots from the breast of his doublets. The meat is a sham, and the wine a sham, and the money a sham; but are there no other shams, oh, brothers and sisters! besides those of the footlights? Have I not dined with my legs under sham mahogany, illuminated by sham wax-lights? Has not a sham hostess helped me

to sham boiled turkey? Has not my sham health been drunk by sham friends? Do I know no haughty Hospodar of Hungary myself?

There is one piece, and one piece only, on the stage, in which a real banquet—a genuine spread—is provided. That piece is “No Song, No Supper.” However small may be the theatre—however low the state of the finances—the immemorial tradition is respected, and a *real leg of mutton* graces the board. Once, the chronicle goes, there was a heartless monster, in property-man shape, who substituted a dish of mutton chops for the historical *gigot*. Execration, abhorrence, expulsion followed his iniquitous fraud, and he was, from that day, a property-man accursed. Curiously enough, while the leg of mutton in “No Song, No Supper,” is always real, the cake, introduced in the same piece, is as invariably a counterfeit—the old stock wooden cake of the theatre. When it shall be known why waiters wear white neckcloths, and dustmen shorts and ankle-jacks, the proximate cause of this discrepancy will, perhaps, be pointed out.

To return to the property-room of the Theatre Royal, Hatton Garden. Mr. Gorget, the property “master,” as he is called, is working with almost delirious industry. He has an imperial crown on his head (recently gilt—the crown, not the head—and placed there to dry), while on the table before him lies a mass of

modelling clay, on which his nimble fingers are shaping out the matrix of a monstrous human face, for a pantomimic mask. How quickly, and with what facility he moulds the hideous physiognomy into shape—squeezing the eyelids, flattening the nose, elongating the mouth, furrowing the cheeks! When this clay model is finished, it will be well oiled, and a cast taken from it in plaster of Paris. Into this cast (oiled again) strips of brown paper, well glued and sized, will be pasted, till a proper thickness is obtained. When dry, the cast is removed, and the hardened paper mask ready for colouring. At this latter process, an assistant, whose nose and cheeks are plentifully enriched with Dutch metal and splashes of glue, is at work. He is very liberal with rose pink to the noses, black to the eyebrows, and white to the eye. Then Mrs. Gorget, a mild little woman, who has been assiduously spangling a demon’s helmet, proceeds to ornament the masks with huge masses of oakum and horsehair, red, brown, and black, which are destined to serve as their coiffure. Busily other assistants are painting tables, gilding goblets, and manufacturing the multifarious and bewilderingly miscellaneous articles required in the “comic business” of a pantomime: the sausages which the Clown purloins, the bustle he takes from the young lady, the fish, eggs, poultry, warming-pans, babies, pint pots, butcher’s trays, and legs of mut-

ton, incidental to his checkered career.

Others besides adults are useful in the property-room. A bright-eyed little girl, Mr. Gorget's youngest, is gravely speckling a plum-pudding; while her brother, a stalwart rogue of eleven, sits on a stool with a pot full of yellow ochre in one hand, and a brush in the other, with which he is giving a plentiful coat of bright yellow colour to a row containing a dozen pairs of hunting boots. These articles of costume will gleam to-night on the legs and feet of the huntsmen of his highness the Hospodar, with whom you are already acquainted. Their wearers will stamp their soles on the merry green-sward — ha, ha! — waving above their heads the tin porringers, supposed to contain Rhine wine or Bairisch beer.

Mr. Gorget will have no easy task for the next three weeks. He will have to be up early and late until "Fee-fo-fum" is produced. The nightly performances have, meanwhile, to be attended to, and any new properties wanted must be made, and any old ones spoilt must be replaced, in addition to what is required for the pantomime. And something more than common abilities must have abiding place in a property-man, although he does not receive uncommonly liberal remuneration. He must be a decent upholsterer, a carpenter, a wig-maker, a painter, a decorator, accurate as regards historical propriety, a skilful modeller, a facile carver, a taste-

ful embroiderer, a general handy man and jack-of-all-trades. He must know something of pyrotechnics, a good deal of carving and gilding, and a little of mechanics. For this he gets, perhaps, fifty shillings a-week.

Let us come away from the property-room, giving a glance into that grim, cavernous, coal-hole place on the left, where all the broken-up, used-out, properties are thrown, and is a sort of limbo of departed pantomimes; and peeping curiously also into the room, where, on racks and on hooks, are arranged the cuirasses, muskets, swords, spears and yeomanry helmets, which form the armoury of the theatre. Time presses, and we must have a look at the proceedings in the wardrobe.

Mr. Baster is busily stitching, with many other stitchers (females) all of a row. His place of work is anything but large, and movement is rendered somewhat inconvenient, moreover, by a number of heavy presses, crammed to repletion with the costumes of the establishment. Mr. Baster has been overhauling his stock, to see what he can conveniently use again, and what is really wanted new. He has passed in review the crimson velvet noblemen, the green-serge retainers, the span-gled courtiers, the glazed-calico slaves, the "shirts," "shapes," "Romaldis," and "strips" of other days. He has held up to the light last year's Clown's dress, and shakes his head ruefully, when

he contemplates the rents and rivings, the rags and tatters, into which that once brilliant costume is reduced. Clown must, evidently, be new all over. His fore-woman is busy spangling Harlequin's patch-work dress; while, in the hands of his assistants, sprites and genii, slaves and evil spirits, are in various stages of completion. So, in the ladies' wardrobe, where Miss de Loggie and her assistants are stitching for dear life, at Sea-nymphs', and Sirens', and Elfin's costume; and where Miss Mezzanine, who is to play Columbine, is agonizingly inquisitive as to the fit of her skirt and spangles.

Work, work, work, everywhere; — in the bleak morning, when play-goers of the previous night have scarcely finished their first sleep; at night, to the music of the orchestra below, and amid the hot glare of the gas. Mr. Tacks carries screws in his waistcoat pockets, and screws in his mouth. Mr. Gorget grows absolutely rigid with glue, while his assistants' heads and hands are unpleasantly enriched with Dutch metal and foil-paper; and the staircase is blocked up with frantic waiters laden with chops and stout for Mr. Brush and his assistants. The management smiles approvingly, and winces uneasily, occasionally, as Boxing-day draws near; the stage manager is unceasing in his "get ons." All day long the private door of the management is assailed by emissaries from Mr. Tacks for more nails, from Mr. Brush for more Venetian red and

burnt sienna, from Mr. Baster for more velvet, from Mr. Gorget for more glue. The management moves uneasily in its chair. "Great expense," it says. "If it should fail?" "Give us more nails, hands, Venetian red, velvet, and glue, and we'll *not* fail," chorus the ants behind the baize.

Nor must you suppose that the pantomimists — Clown, Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Columbine — nor the actors playing in the opening, nor the fairies who fly, nor the demons who howl, nor the sprites who tumble, are idle. Every day the opening and comic scenes are rehearsed. Every day a melancholy man, called the *répétiteur*, takes his station on the stage, which is illumined by one solitary gas jet; and, to the dolour-music he conjures from his fiddle, the pantomimists, in over-suits of coarse linen, tumble, dance, jump, and perform other gymnastic exercises in the gloom, until their bones ache, and the perspiration streams from their limbs.

Work, work, work, and Christmas-eve is here. Nails, hammers, paint-brushes, needles, muscles and limbs going in every direction. Mr. Brush has not had his boots cleaned for a week, and has forgotten what sheets and counterpanes mean. No snap-dragon for Mr. Tacks, no hunt-the-slipper for Mr. Gorget. Pleasant Christmas greetings and good wishes, though, and general surmises that the pantomime will be a "stunning" one. Christmas-day, and, alas and alack! no Christmas beef

and pudding, save that from the cook-shop, and perchance the spare repast in the covered basin which little Polly Bruggs brings stalwart Bill Bruggs, the carpenter, who is popularly supposed to be able to carry a pair of wings beneath each arm. Incessant fiddling from the *répétiteur*. "Trip," "rally," and "jump," for the pantomimists. Work on the stage, which is covered with canvas, and stooping painters, working with brushes stuck in bamboo walking-sticks. Work in the flies, and work underneath the stage, on the umbrageous mezzonine floor, where the cellar-men are busily slinging "sinks" and "rises," and greasing traps. An overflow of properties deluges the green room; huge masks leer at you in narrow passages; pantomimic wheel-barrows and barrel-organs beset you at every step. So all Christmas-night.

Hurrah for Boxing-day! The "compliments of the season," and the "original dustman." Tommy and Billy (suffering slightly from indigestion) stand with their noses glued against the window-panes at home, watching anxiously the rain in the puddles, or the accumulating snow on the house-tops. Little Mary's mind is filled with radiant visions of the resplendent sashes she is to wear, and the gorgeous fairies she is to see. John, the footman, is to escort the housemaid into the pit; even Joe Barrikin, of the New Cut, who sells us our cauliflowers, will treat his "missus" to a seat

in the gallery for the first performance of Harlequin Fee-fo-fum.

There — the last clink of the hammer is heard, the last stroke of the brush, and the last stitch of the needle. The management glances with anxious approval at the elaborately funny bill prepared of the evening's entertainment. It is six o'clock in the evening. The Clown (Signor Brownarini, of the Theatres Royal) has a jug of barleywater made, his only beverage during his tumbling, and anxiously assures himself that there is a red-hot poker introduced into the comic business; "else," says he, "the pantomime is sure to fail." It is astonishing what a close connection there is between the success of a pantomime and that red-hot poker. Seven o'clock, and one last frantic push to get everything ready. Tommy, Billy, Mary, Papa and Mamma, arrive in flies, broughams, or cabs. The footman and housemaid are smiling in the pit; and Joe Barrikin is amazingly jolly and thirsty, with his "missus" in the gallery. Now then, "Music!" "Play up!" "Order, order!" and "Throw him over!" "George Barnwell," or "Jane Shore," inaudible of course, and then "Harlequin Fee-fo-fum, or the Enchanted Fairy of the Island of Abracadabra." Fun, frolic, and gaiety; splendour, beauty, and blue-fire; hey for fun! "How are you to-morrow?" and I hope success and crowded houses till the middle of February,

both for the sake of the author, the management, and the Theatre Royal, Hatton Garden, generally.

The ants behind the baize have worked well, but they have their reward in the "glorious success" of the pantomime they have laboured so hard at. They may wash their faces, and have their boots cleaned now; and who shall say that they do not deserve their beer to-night, and their poor salaries next Saturday?

Dear readers, as Christmas time comes on, pause a little ere you utterly condemn these poor play-acting people as utter profligates, as irreclaimable rogues and vagabonds. Consider how hard they work, how precarious is their employment, how honestly they endeavour to earn their living, and to do their duty in their state of life. Admit that there is some skill, some industry, some perseverance, in all this, not misdirected if promoting harmless fancy and innocent mirth.

THE LEGEND OF THE WEEPING CHAMBER.

A STRANGE story was once told me by a Levantine lady of my acquaintance, which I shall endeavour to relate — as far as I am able with the necessary abridgments — in her own words. The circumstances under which she told it were peculiar. The family had just been disturbed by the visit of a ghost — a real ghost, visible, if not palpable. She was

not what may be called superstitious; and though following with more or less assiduity the practices of her religion, was afflicted now and then with a fit of perfect materialism. I was surprised, therefore, to hear her relate, with every appearance of profound faith, the following incidents: —

There is an old house in Beyrout, which, for many successive years, was inhabited by a Christian family. It is of great extent, and was of yore fitted for the dwelling of a prince. The family had, indeed, in early times been very rich; and almost fabulous accounts are current of the wealth of its founder, Fadlallah Dahân. He was a merchant; the owner of ships, the fitter-out of caravans. The regions of the East and of the West had been visited by him; and, after undergoing as many dangers and adventures as Sinbad, he had returned to spend the latter days of his life in his native city. He built, accordingly, a magnificent dwelling, the courts of which he adorned with marble fountains, and the chambers with silk divans; and he was envied on account of his prosperity.

But, in the restlessness of his early years, he had omitted to marry, and now found himself near the close of his career without an heir to inherit his wealth and to perpetuate his name. This reflection often disturbed him; yet he was unwilling to take a wife because he was old. Every now and then, it is true, he saw men older than he, with fewer teeth

and whiter beards, taking to their bosoms maidens that bloomed like peaches just beginning to ripen against a wall; and his friends, who knew he would give a magnificent marriage-feast, urged him to do likewise. Once he looked with pleasure on a young person of not too tender years, whose parents purposely presented her to him; but having asked her in a whisper whether she would like to marry a withered old gentleman like himself, she frankly confessed a preference for his handsome young clerk, Harma, who earned a hundred piastres a month. Fadlallah laughed philosophically, and took care that the young couple should be married under happy auspices.

One day he was proceeding along the street gravely and slowly — surrounded by a number of merchants proud to walk by his side, and followed by two or three young men, who pressed near in order to be thought of the company, and thus establish their credit — when an old woman espying him, began to cry out, "Yeh! yeh! this is the man who has no wife and no child — this is the man who is going to die and leave his fortune to be robbed by his servants, or confiscated by the governor! And yet, he has a sagacious nose" — (the Orientals have observed that there is wisdom in a nose) — "and a beard as long as my back! Yeh! yeh! what a wonderful sight to see!"

Fadlallah Dahân stopped, and retorted, smiling: "Yeh! yeh!

this is the woman that blames an old man for not marrying a young wife. Yeh! yeh! what a wonderful sight to see!"

Then the woman replied, "O my lord, every pig's tail curls not in the same direction, nor does every maiden admire the passing quality of youth. If thou wilt, I will bestow on thee a wife, who will love thee as thou lovest thyself, and serve thee as the angels serve Allah. She is more beautiful than any of the daughters of Beyrout, and her name is Selima, a name of good augury."

The friends of Fadlallah laughed, as did the young men who followed in their wake, and urged him to go and see this peerless beauty, if it were only for a joke. Accordingly, he told the woman to lead the way. But she said he must mount his mule, for they had to go some distance into the country. He mounted and, with a single servant, went forth from the gates — the woman preceding — and rode until he reached a village in the mountains. Here, in a poor little house, he found Selima; clothed in the very commonest style, engaged in making divan cushions. She was a marvellously beautiful girl, and the heart of the merchant at once began to yearn towards her: yet he endeavoured to restrain himself, and said, "This beautiful thing is not for me." But the woman cried out, "Selima, wilt thou consent to love this old man?" The girl gazed in his face awhile, and then, folding her

hands across her bosom, said, "Yes; for there is goodness in his countenance." Fadlallah wept with joy; and, returning to the city, announced his approaching marriage to his friends. According to custom, they expressed civil surprise to his face; but, when his back was turned, they whispered that he was an old fool, and had been the dupe of a she-adventurer.

The marriage took place with ceremonies of royal magnificence; and Selima, who passed unmoved from extreme poverty to abundant riches, seemed to merit the position of the greatest lady in Beyrout. Never was woman more prudent than she. No one ever knew her previous history, nor that of her mother. Some said that a life of misery, perhaps of shame, was before them, when this unexpected marriage took place. Selima's gratitude to Fadlallah was unbounded; and out of gratitude grew love. The merchant daily offered up thanks for the bright diamond which had come to shine in his house.

In due time a child was born; a boy lively as his mother; and they named him Halil. With what joy he was received, what festivities announced the glad intelligence to the town, may easily be imagined. Selima and Fadlallah resolved to devote themselves to his education, and determined that he should be the most accomplished youth of Bar-er-Shâm. But a long succession of children followed, each more beautiful

than the former — some boys, some girls; and every new comer was received with additional delight and still grander ceremonies; so that the people began to say, "Is this a race of sovereigns?"

Now, Halil grew up to the age of twelve — still a charming lad; but the parents, always fully occupied by the last arrival, had not carried out their project of education. He was as wild and untamed as a colt, and spent more of his time in the street than in the company of his mother; who, by degrees, began to look upon him with a kind of calm friendship due to strangers. Fadlallah, as he took his accustomed walk with his merchant friends, used from time to time to encounter a ragged boy fighting in the streets with the sons of the Jew butcher; but his eyes beginning to grow dim, he often passed without recognising him. One day, however, Halil, breathless and bleeding, ran up and took refuge beneath the skirts of his mantle from a crowd of savage urchins. Fadlallah was amazed, and said, "O, my son — for I think thou art my son — what evil hath befallen thee, and wherefore do I see thee in this state?" The boy, whose voice was choked by sobs, looked up into his face, and said, "Father, I am the son of the richest merchant of Beyrout, and behold, there is no one so little cared for as I."

Fadlallah's conscience smote him, and he wiped the boy's bleeding face with the corner of

his silk caftan, and blessed him; and, taking him by the hand, led him away. The merchants smiled benignly one to the other, and, pointing with their thumbs, said, "We have seen the model youth!"

Whilst they laughed and sneered, Fadlallah, humbled, yet resolved, returned to his house, leading the ragged Halil, and entered his wife's chamber. Selima was playing with her seventh child, and teaching it to lisp the word "Baba" — about the amount of education which she had found time to bestow on each of her offspring. When she saw the plight of her eldest son she frowned, and was about to scold him; but Fadlallah interposed, and said, "Wife, speak no harsh words. We have not done our duty by this boy. May God forgive us; but we have looked on those children that have bloomed from thee, more as play-things than as deposits for which we are responsible. Halil has become a wild out-of-doors lad, doubting with some reason of our love. It is too late to bring him back to the destiny we had dreamt of; but he must not be left to grow up thus uncared for. I have a brother established in Bassora; to him will I send the lad to learn the arts of commerce, and to exercise himself in adventure, as his father did before him. Bestow thy blessing upon him, Selima (here the good old man's voice trembled), and may God in his mercy forgive both thee and me for the neglect which has made this parting ne-

cessary. I shall know that I am forgiven if, before I go down into the tomb, my son return a wise and sober man; not unmindful that we gave him life, and forgetting that, until now, we have given him little else."

Selima laid her seventh child in its cradle of carved wood, and drew Halil to her bosom; and Fadlallah knew that she loved him still, because she kissed his face, regardless of the blood and dirt that stained it. She then washed him and dressed him, and gave him a purse of gold, and handed him over to his father; who had resolved to send him off by the caravan that started that very afternoon. Halil, surprised and made happy by unwonted caresses, was yet delighted at the idea of beginning an adventurous life; and went away, manfully stifling his sobs, and endeavouring to assume the grave deportment of a merchant. Selima shed a few tears, and then, attracted by a crow and a chuckle from the cradle, began to tickle the infant's soft double chin, and went on with her interrupted lesson, "Baba, Baba!"

Halil started on his journey, and having passed through the Valley of Robbers, the Valley of Lions, and the Valley of Devils — this is the way in which Orientals localise the supposed dangers of travelling — arrived at the good city of Bassora; where his uncle received him well, and promised to send him as supercargo on board the first vessel he des-

patched to the Indian seas. What time was spent by the caravan upon the road, the narrative does not state. Travelling is slow work in the East; but almost immediately on his arrival in Bassora, Halil was engaged in a love adventure. If travelling is slow, the approaches of manhood are rapid. The youth's curiosity was excited by the extraordinary care taken to conceal his cousin Miriam from his sight; and having introduced himself into her garden, beheld, and, struck by her wonderful beauty, loved her. With an Oriental fondness, he confessed the truth to his uncle, who listened with anger and dismay, and told him that Miriam was betrothed to the Sultan. Halil perceived the danger of indulging his passion, and promised to suppress it; but whilst he played a prudent part, Miriam's curiosity was also excited, and she too beheld and loved her cousin. Bolts and bars cannot keep two such affections asunder. They met and plighted their troth, and were married secretly, and were happy. But inevitable discovery came. Miriam was thrown into a dungeon; and the unhappy Halil, loaded with chains, was put on board a vessel, not as supercargo, but as prisoner; with orders that he should be left in some distant country.

Meanwhile a dreadful pestilence fell upon Beyrout, and among the first sufferers was an eighth little one, that had just learned to say "Baba!" Selima was almost too astonished to be grieved. It seemed

to her impossible that death should come into her house, and meddle with the fruits of so much suffering and love. When they came to take away the little form which she had so often fondled, her indignation burst forth, and she smote the first old woman who stretched out her rough unsympathetic hand. But a shriek from her waiting-women announced that another victim was singled out; and the frantic mother rushed like a tigress to defend the young that yet remained to her. But the enemy was invisible; and (so the story goes) all her little ones drooped one by one and died; so that on the seventh day Selima sat in her nursery gazing about with stony eyes, and counting her losses upon her fingers — Iskender, Selima, Wardy, Fadlallah, Hanna, Hennenah, Gereges — seven in all. Then she remembered Halil, and her neglect of him; and, lifting up her voice, she wept aloud; and, as the tears rushed fast and hot down her cheeks, her heart yearned for her absent boy, and she would have parted with worlds to have fallen upon his breast — would have given up her life in return for one word of pardon and of love.

Fadlallah came in to her; and he was now very old and feeble. His back was bent, and his transparent hand trembled as it clutched a cane. A white beard surrounded a still whiter face; and as he came near his wife, he held out his hand towards her

with an uncertain gesture, as if the room had been dark. This world appeared to him but dimly. "Selima," said he, "the Giver hath taken. We, too, must go in our turn. Weep, my love; but weep with moderation, for those little ones that have gone to sing in the golden cages of Paradise. There is a heavier sorrow in my heart. Since my first-born, Halil, departed for Bassora, I have only written once to learn intelligence of him. He was then well, and had been received with favour by his uncle. We have never done our duty by that boy." His wife replied, "Do not reproach me; for I reproach myself more bitterly than thou canst do. Write, then, to thy brother to obtain tidings of the beloved one. I will make of this chamber a weeping chamber. It has resounded with merriment enough. All my children learned to laugh and to talk here. I will hang it with black, and erect a tomb in the midst; and every day I will come and spend two hours, and weep for those who are gone and for him who is absent." Fadlallah approved her design; and they made a weeping chamber, and lamented together every day therein. But their letters to Bassora remained unanswered; and they began to believe that fate had chosen a solitary tomb for Halil.

One day a woman, dressed in the garb of the poor, came to the house of Fadlallah with a boy about twelve years old. When the merchant saw them he was

struck with amazement, for he beheld in the boy the likeness of his son Halil; and he called aloud to Selima, who, when she came, shrieked with amazement. The woman told her story, and it appeared that she was Miriam. Having spent some months in prison, she had escaped and taken refuge in a forest in the house of her nurse. Here she had given birth to a son, whom she had called by his father's name. When her strength returned, she had set out as a beggar to travel over the world in search of her lost husband. Marvellous were the adventures she underwent, God protecting her throughout, until she came to the land of Persia, where she found Halil working as a slave in the garden of the Governor of Fars. After a few stolen interviews, she had again resumed her wanderings to seek for Fadlallah, that he might redeem his son with wealth; but had passed several years upon the road.

Fortune, however, now smiled upon this unhappy family, and in spite of his age, Fadlallah set out for Fars. Heaven made the desert easy, and the road short for him. On a fine calm evening he entered the gardens of the governor, and found his son gaily singing as he trimmed an orange tree. After a vain attempt to preserve an incognito, the good old man lifted up his hands, and shouting, "Halil, my first born!" fell upon the breast of the astonished slave. Sweet was the interview in the orange grove, sweet the murmured

conversation between the strong young man and the trembling patriarch, until the perfumed dew of evening fell upon their heads. Halil's liberty was easily obtained, and father and son returned in safety to Beyrout. Then the Weeping Chamber was closed, and the door walled up; and Fadlallah and Selima lived happily until age gently did its work at their appointed times; and Halil and Miriam inherited the house and the wealth that had been gathered for them.

The supernatural part of the story remains to be told. The Weeping Chamber was never again opened; but every time that a death was about to occur in the family, a shower of heavy tears was heard to fall upon its marble floor, and low wailings came through the walled doorway. Years, centuries, passed away, and the mystery repeated itself with unvarying uniformity. The family fell into poverty, and only occupied a portion of the house, but invariably before one of its members sickened unto death, a shower of heavy drops, as from a thunder cloud, pattered on the pavement of the Weeping Chamber, and was heard distinctly at night through the whole house. At length the family quitted the country in search of better fortunes elsewhere, and the house remained for a long time uninhabited.

The lady who narrated the story went to live in the house, and passed some years without being

disturbed; but one night she was lying awake, and distinctly heard the warning shower dripping heavily in the Weeping Chamber. Next day the news came of her mother's death, and she hastened to remove to another dwelling. The house has since been utterly abandoned to rats, mice, beetles, and an occasional ghost seen sometimes streaming along the rain-pierced terraces. No one has ever attempted to violate the solitude of the sanctuary where Selima wept for the seven little ones taken to the grave, and for the absent one whom she had treated with unmotherly neglect.

A ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

THE APPLE-GREEN SPENCER.

QUIETLY hidden in the farthest corner of the Pingzau, where not only the rest of Prussia, but the world in general is, or ought to be, locked out by a splendid range of mountains, there is an inn on which I fear to be intruding. It looks a comfortable place, not the less warm for being wooden; and I must poach upon after-experience to let you know that it is under the despotic rule of Gertrude, or, familiarly, Gerl, the landlord's pretty daughter. For her father has voted himself a retiring pension — he is superannuated, though, to be sure, hale enough. Under the satisfactory administration of his daughter, he finds the condition of the inn improving, the revenue on the rise, and there-

fore he has quietly accepted the Chiltern Hundreds of the chimney corner. He says of himself that he is nothing but an old-world landlord, fit to serve his equals, who are old-world also; but the fine lords out of Berlin and England break his peace, and give too many orders. When the migration of the civilised hordes began seriously to disturb peace in the Pinzgau, the crabbed old ruler threw his crown into the lap of Gerl, his thoroughly good-humoured daughter. "Gerl," he asserts, "knows how to deal discreetly with the people of all nations;" and in the practice of her queenly craft she has retained her peasant freshness and simplicity.

Upon this inn I now come down from the mountains, during a sudden Alpine shower. Gerl comes forth to meet me at her threshold, kissing my hand according to the kindly mode of salutation in the Pinzgau; busies herself with the unstrapping of my knapsack; leads me in; carries my wet coats to the fire, and while she sets me down in a pleasant corner of her room, I set *her* down in a pleasant corner of my heart. How do I set her down there? — as a being endowed with a great multitude of little friendly ways, and a broad homely dialect; with a round face, dark eyes, fair hair, and an apple-green spencer.

Gerl, having soon enabled me to form some practical ideas on the subject of her larder, as a matter of course leads the way, in

the next place, to the "Krirralfalls." To this waterfall Gerl is indebted for her extensive practice in the management of travellers. The good genius of the cataracts causes the good girl to sit like Danaë, or like a damsel in a pantomime — if I may allude thus early to the dimensions of her little bills — under a tolerable rain of gold. But, never mind the gold; we have another dreary subject before us; for through just such a gloomy rent as might contain a dragon, or some other fiery monster, high up among the snow-fields and glaciers (which Gerl calls the "Kees"), a watery monster rushes; troubled with a husky roar. Deep down below us, where the valley opens, the water fairies are as plentiful as lilies, only they avoid the sight of man, and therefore nobody has seen them. The Pinzgau people are by no means of opinion that the fairies are a good-for-nothing race. "See how that piece of rock is shaking, though the torrent scarcely beats at all upon it. I can tell you why that is," said Gerl. "Nothing will grow there; and the fairies are at work to clear the useless lump away." Either this is a legend of the Pinzgau, or the discreet Gerl, holding firmly by her fairies, has perceived the necessity of adapting them to the understanding of utilitarians, and gratifying the prejudices of the men of business, agriculturists, and others, who are on the way to Gastein for recovery of health. So we stand here, and see the torrent flinging pearls

about the stubborn rocks, that toss them away instantly. But never mind: down in the valley we can see also a mob of flowers with uplifted heads — “the painted populace of the plains,” as Gray has sung — and I warrant that there is not a blossom in the throng that is not staring upwards with a few pearls in its eye.

Then we go back and leave the roar behind; and, at a short distance before us the wild rocks are enlivened by the Apple-green Spencer. Smoking dishes await us at the inn, and, to my discomfort, also smoking men. The house is full of Berlin people, who are making a great noise, wrangling fearfully, and drying their canary-coloured cloaks. I tremble lest Gerl should be worried out of her good temper. But she flits about like an apple-green will-o'-the-wisp, and gives her orders so briskly, that one feels quite to tingle and glow as they strike one's ear, sharply, like bracing morning air; they come about our eyes like a brisk wind on a clear blue winter's day, and work our spirits into such elasticity, that it is difficult to resist an impulse to start up and perform the behests of the Apple-green Imperatrix one's self. Her father, immovable and stolid, sits by the fire, and relates in an even unmitigated tone to old Schweinermichel the guide, a few facts concerning the time when he served under the famous Archduke Charles, and was encamped before Amberg and Würzburg against the French.

I declare that Gerl is quite a mother to me; perhaps because I am the only person who is not making a noise. She protects me tenderly against the guests from Berlin. I like to have an apple-green mother; much better, indeed, than to have a grandfather who will not cease to talk military despatches, under any circumstances whatever. This is the fourth time I have overheard the siege of Amberg; but the rascal Schweinermichel has not heard it more than twice; for he has been asleep during the last two recitals. To be sure, however, he has had the advantage over me on previous occasions. The Berliners begin to wrangle so horribly, that I am sent to bed; and I go meekly. Gerl, of course, knows what is best. Long after I am gone to bed, I hear the noise, and hear the hostess busy with the guests. At day-break I awake, but I hear Gerl's feet already trotting about the house. When does she sleep?

The breakfast-table makes me fancy for a minute that I went to bed in Austria, and have come down stairs this morning into Scotland. Then there are glasses playing with a bit of sun upon the side-board, and they stand beside a flask of brandy. I am not to issue unarmed against the sword-blades of the mountain winds. Gerl helps me to put on my outer coverings, all dry and cleanly brushed; she performs some minor operations, and — incredible! — she sews me on a button. She is the best of mothers!

That is, she would be the best of mothers but for her bill. How, out of that little domestic haven of a pocket, there can come this large, unconscionable bill, passes my comprehension. The man in the grey coat did not astonish Peter Schlemihl more, when he pulled three horses out of a side pocket, which had already produced a tent, a Turkey carpet, and a telescope, than Gerl astonished me, when she put her hand into her apron pocket and produced this elephantine bill. After all, there is this to be said of the true mothers, that for their money, their trouble, or their love, neither on paper, nor within their hearts, can sons say that they keep Debtor or Creditor account; though we pay nothing, they will not remind us of a bill. Feeling a little apple-green myself, or like a man who has been so considered by his hostess, I discharge the reckoning without a grunt. After all, Gerl is in the right; what cares she for the fine lords and Berliners, or for a poor roving Englishman, except as the materials of trade? She is true to the nature of her sex, in working these materials up energetically. Besides, it is the only way she has of extorting — certainly, extorting — our respect, by showing to us foreigners that she also is civilised. I pay Gerl's bill; and as I go away, she stretches out her hand so kindly, and looks so true-hearted, that I advise you, if you go to the Pinzgau and get such a bill as this out of an apron pocket, to pay it without grunting,

for the sake of getting your good-bye said generously, without any extra charge.

GASTEIN BATHS.

FROM Gerl's inn to Gastein, in the Pinzgau, is not a long journey. I think if you can imagine an old German giant out of "The Niebelungen Lied," with an elegant cravat and a diamond pin under his uncombed beard, you can form some notion of Gastein. But, although that will give you a notion of the wildness of this fashionable place, it will leave out of account what is by no means to be omitted, the element of beauty in its green slopes and woods. Gastein itself is an odd mixture of lowly huts and lofty palaces, of Alpine dust and drawing-room perfumes. The Gastein peasant girls, in picturesque attire, have the advantage of studying in the streets the latest fashions from Paris; the cowherd, in his thick-nailed shoes, if he will not mind where he is going, may, perchance, tread on the japanned toes of a Prussian minister. You read daily, in the visitors' book of the hotel, names so high-born, that you walk about the corridors with reverence; and then many of the people seem to be such Cooks, Bruces, and Mungo Parks, that you feel quite ashamed of yourself for having neglected to call at Smyrna or St. Petersburg upon the way to Gastein.

Then you step out into the fresh air and take a ramble in the woods, and do not feel oppressed

so greatly by the dignity of nature's decorations, as you have been by the stars and bits of ribbon there in the hotel. You are so irreverent as to forget the great men altogether, and to be thinking about yonder milkmaid tripping through the greenwood, when a turn in the path casts you a complete wreck on the reef of the provoking old Privy Councillor from Berlin, with his two beautiful daughters. You wanted to indulge a little in the luxury of thought, and, wrapped in yourself, to love and enjoy all things from a little distance. But now you must shake hands, and help the little ladies up the mountain.

No doubt they mince the Berlin accent very prettily, and their papa mouths it with peculiar magnificence; and you all laugh a great deal, and are spasmodically merry. The damsels have some flowers, which they did not pick; they have just bought them on the road, and they are pulling them to pieces on the most approved principles of art. I do not mean the lively art of wilfulness, but the extremely dull art of Linnæan classification; they are finding out how many monandrias, and polyandrias, with any-number-of-gynias, their nosegays may contain. This being settled, they proceed to enlighten you upon the geological peculiarities of the surrounding district. The two lecturers next divide the world into four quarters, and proceed to go through them *seriatim*.

At the risk of being thought

rude, you diplomatised against the old statesman and his daughters, and effect an escape at last. You plunge into the forest: there you lie down under a majestic fir, and look up at the blue sky through its leaves, and hear the rustling of the wood, and watch the birds as they come home from business, where they have been intent on making satisfactory provision for their families. Perhaps you feel, thus pleasantly surrounded, that the moral world, or the intellectual, is no more than this wood, a place of sticks and rotten leaves. Especially when you regard that moral and intellectual world, as exemplified in your own bosom, you feel that you have wasted much time that has brought neither true profit nor enjoyment; you feel capable of an immense number of things, and you get up with a fresh heart and walk stoutly on, determined to march out of the wood, and give your energies fair and full play, and show the world what you can do.

Thus minded, you walk back to the hotel, and are a little late for dinner. That provokes you. You sit down at the *table d'hôte*, and the immense man on your right hand you conjecture by his build to be Bavarian. You would like much to hear him speak, for confirmation's sake. He helps himself twice from every dish, and whenever he wipes his mouth, a gentle murmur issues from it, but it is not articulate. On your left hand is a wedded pair from Modern Athens. Scots will restrain their

anger when I say that Munich claims that title, ignorant that it belongs to Edinburgh. You suppose this couple to belong to the class of well-fleshed people, whose mission in society is that which has been sometimes ascribed to the spleen within our body, to serve as a warm pad, or stuffing, for the filling of gaps within the social circle. This man and wife are travellers, you find, who have, hitherto, eaten at every stage of their journey delicious trout of the Alps, and are now earnestly discussing how to shape their future rambles, so as to find, if possible, still better fish.

Opposite to you sits a student from Upper Austria; he is making on foot the usual summer ramble. He has a huge beer jug before him, and his sighs deepen as the level of the beer descends. What are his thoughts behind that cloud of smoke? Possibly pure and beautiful, but your attention is directed to the Prussian Privy Councillor, who is about to pay his bill with Austrian bank notes. He cannot be made to understand the value of those filthy little two-penny and threepenny notes, torn into halves and quarters, which are offered to him as change out of a note for five florins, about half a sovereign. He demands silver of the astonished waiting-maid; but it is many years since silver was much current with her, and she looks her answer at the Privy Councillor with an amusing stare.

The Prussians are notable for

prudence and economy, and if you wonder at the statesman's distress, buy two damp cigars of the pedlar who is passing, and offer him a paper florin; he will insist upon trusting your honour rather than give change. Life is short, and talk ought therefore never to be long. I have imagined you doing exactly what I did myself at Gastein. Having no appetite for medicinal water, I did not patronise the baths. But — Life is short, so let us cease from talking about so insignificant a matter.

THE GLASTONBURY THORN.*

THERE grew, within a favour'd vale,
As old traditions tell the tale,
A famous, flowering, Eastern thorn,
Which blossom'd every Christmas morn.

No lowly hearth, no lordly hall,
New dress'd for the yearly festival,
But gathered it, as the gift of May,
To honour the auspicious day.

And brightly 'mid the Christmas green
It shines, in the fire-light's ruddy sheen,
Mix'd with hard berries that gleam and
glow
From holly and from mistletoe.

That tree is like the Tree of Life,
Which buds when the season of joy is rife,
And flowers when the bright dawn wakes
above

The day that Religion gave birth to Love.

And, as Time the eternal morn resumes,
Humanity's grateful joy o'erblooms
The naked sight of the bleeding thorn,
Which Love on his brows for man hath
worn.

* There is an old legend that Joseph of Arithmathea came to Glastonbury, and planted there a *thorn*, which grew and flourished, and blossomed every Christmas-day.

O! let us still through loye unite
To celebrate the holy rite;
That all the thorns of life may show
Nought but sweet flowers above the snow!

A PREMIER'S CORRESPONDENTS.

AMONG the collections comprising the additional MSS. preserved in the British Museum, will be found four quarto volumes, a portion of a bequest to the country by the late Sir William Musgrave, Baronet. The first two volumes contain a collection of autograph signatures of eminent men of England, from an early period. The other two are occupied by the fragments of the letters from which many of these signatures have been cut, and will be found, on examination, to consist of a portion of the official correspondence of John, third Earl of Bute, Secretary of State under George the Second, and Prime Minister during the earlier years of the reign of George the Third.

Although many of these letters are considerably mutilated, the number remaining in good condition, is sufficient to afford us some examples of the extent and variety of the communications which a Cabinet Minister is at all times obliged to receive. Here, a noble and nowise particular Earl "entreats to be mentioned to the King for some mark of his Majesty's royal favour." There, a bookseller, of some note in his day, writes to excuse himself for some attacks upon the Minister in

a newspaper belonging to him; the blame of which he throws, without remorse, upon the shoulders of his editor. A Head of a College, whose head aches for a mitre, writes offers of courtesies to the Minister's son, on his entry into *Alma Mater*. An Architect sends plans for a palace; a Jeweller proposes for a new crown. One applicant wants a prebendal stall for his son's tutor; another, a seat in Parliament for himself. A Doctor of Divinity is "anxious to be appointed teacher of English to the Princess whom his Majesty has declared his intention of espousing," and who accordingly became Queen Charlotte; and a Doctor of Medicine entreats Lord Bute's interest "for the honour of the King standing godfather to his son." One gentleman writes from Lisbon, with a Spanish horse and the news of the earthquake; and another, from the Hague, with a catalogue of a picture sale, and congratulations on the taking of Quebec.

By one, the Minister is called upon to act as the medium of an explanation to the King of the writer's absence from a levee; by another, as the bearer of thanks for some mark of royal favour: by a third, he is appealed to for the solution of some problem in court etiquette. Thus, because Sir John Griffin (we mangle all the names we meet with purposely) has received a summons to attend an investiture "of the Order of the Bath at St. James's;" and, since Sir John is suffering under an attack of gout,

therefore it is required that the Minister should advise him whether he may appear, with decorum, "upon crutches."

Perhaps the same pure source of pleasure is open to all Prime Ministers alike; but of Lord Bute only we speak by the card, as a man apparently overwhelmed with one of the world's best blessings — troops of friends. How respectfully enthusiastic are their expressions of esteem for their noble correspondent; how reassuring the unanimity of their concurrence in all the varied details of his public policy! How touching, too, is the anxiety expressed by each writer to prove, by deeds as well as by words, the sincerity of his professions! Thus, Mr. Bone takes the trouble of writing from Paris to congratulate Lord Bute on his appointment as Secretary of State. He felt himself unable, he says, "to read the account of the appointment in the *Gazette*, without expressing the joy which, from his sincere attachment to his lordship, the circumstance has occasioned him, and the happiness he should feel in demonstrating that attachment, had he power equal to his zeal." Nothing could have been more disinterested than this intense delight and warm attachment, had not Mr. Bone concluded his letter with a supplication for the renewal to his wife of a pension of four hundred pounds a year.

Mr. Horner (having up to that time worshipped Lord Bute from the distant shores of India) takes

the liberty, on the 13th of June, 1762, of offering him a pair of pearl pagodas. Desiring, as a warm heart must, that the friendly feeling should be mutual; but, well aware that Lord Bute would be wasting valuable time if he should himself be seeking for a token of reciprocal good-will, intimates, on the 17th of the following month, that he (Mr. Horner) would like to be appointed a Surveyor of Customs.

Will the Minister, who is regarded by Mr. Chetwynd as "the tenderest of parents," get a commission in the army for that gentleman's son? Of course, from "the most devoted of husbands," it is a pure offering before the shrine of Hymen to consent to provide pensions and housekeepers' places for the wives of other people; Colonel Hamilton and Mr. Fowke know this, and write home to the bosom of Lord Bute, not as a Minister, but as a man.

Much of the correspondence from Lord Bute's countrymen might serve as a register of official deaths; and so often as the demise of a Scottish peer takes place, are we certain to find his lordship's vote and interest the object of instant and eager competition. Candidates for the honours of the Lower House, too, are not less ready to confide in the Minister than their brother competitors of the peerage. Sir William Orby, for instance, after some eloquent denunciations of the corruption of the times occasioned by the

threat of a political opponent to spend ten thousand pounds to counteract his views on the borough of Bodmin, suggests that he has reason to believe that this little difficulty might be got over by the promotion of the brother of his adversary, a lieutenant in the Coldstream regiment, to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. This simple plan would, he observes, "make affairs at Bodmin very quiet, and little expensive, and lay a foundation to settle that borough hereafter, in an equable way." The readiness to give advice is the first fruit of friendship; apt to be sour, as first fruits are; but for Lord Bute, advice can only tend, like this, to "make things pleasant."

Some correspondents, we find — even as absent lovers record their past kisses — remind Lord Bute agreeably of their past services; while others appeal to his magnanimity, by frankly avowing that they have no claims on him at all. Thus, Mr. Colborn being, as he says, "very little known to his lordship, and not having the least pretensions to found a hope of his protection on;" and holding, moreover, already, he might have added, a lucrative public appointment; "desiring his lordship's happiness, and knowing how blessed a thing it is to give," applies for a place about the Court which might be given to his wife. Mr. Gascoigne, a gentleman of landed estate in a southern county, being "wholly unknown to Lord Bute, feels," to use his own words, "that his application, under such

circumstances, to a gentleman of such high rank and station, might be looked upon as presumptuous." "But," he continues, "I consider your lordship in an abstracted light from your predecessors, and that your actions are founded upon patriotism and the most distinguished reason, and conducted with resolution and a determination to relieve a country exhausted of its treasures, if not to restore it to its ancient power and splendour." Looking at Lord Bute in this point of view, Mr. Gascoigne feels no difficulty in applying to the Minister, "as a gentleman having a regard to posterity," for a place under Government "for the support of his family." Some of Lord Bute's admirers throw themselves upon his magnanimity, with beautiful reliance. For example, Mr. Boden only wishes "to have something done for him, and does not take the liberty to carve for himself." Mr. Fisher prefers a claim to a lottery commissionership; which is distinctly made out upon the ground of his never having asked for anything before. Dr. Bentham's application to be made one of the king's chaplains is based very fairly indeed on "the obliging manner" in which his lordship had "been pleased to accept a former application" for something else. Says one, "It is the first time I ever asked bread in the streets;" and, says another, "Often I've begged, and it's not you who ever turned me off, without my penny."

Mr. Champignon begs Lord Bute to aid his views by three simple letters of introduction. This favour he may indeed say that he has merited by various secret services to the British Government, "in casting a light" on certain mysteries connected with the expedition to the Elbe; and he adds, "If your lordship will accord me a quarter of an hour's audience, I offer to enable you to penetrate into the most intimate secrets of a royal court, with the same facility that you know daily what passes in the House of Commons, and that, too, by a means worthy of you and of me. You will readily understand, my lord, that these sort of things are not to be committed to paper; they are to be communicated only by word of mouth, and, even then, in a low tone of voice." Lord Bute, perhaps, jealous of a rival in magnanimity, appears to have declined this favour. Champignon having turned then to the intervention of a friend at court, had his suit generously taken up and privately promoted. Baron Haslang, the Bavarian minister, transmitting a further appeal from "the unlucky Champignon," begs his lordship "to give him something to get rid of him," so that "we may be no more troubled by his importunity."

It is quite clear that the receipt of favours grates on the fine mind of a minister. Mr. Thomas Lowe, of Quality Court, Chancery Lane, is desirous of submitting to Lord Bute a plan for obtaining a sum

of money for the public service. Unfortunately, he is not at liberty in a letter to mention by what means the money may be procured; but "this," says he, "I will take upon myself to say, that it will raise an incredible sum in a few months; is an imposition of the lowest denomination; cannot be objected to, with the least reason, by any individual or body of men; may be collected at an easy expense, and cannot fail of bringing in yearly an immense sum." One is vexed that a secret with such a combination of recommendations should have perished; and that Mr. Bull, missing that tide in his affairs which, taken at the flood, would have led to fortune, should still be labouring under an Income Tax and a National Debt.

The imprudent ambition of persons who build houses too magnificent for their means, is, if we may judge from the lodging-letting and auctioneer's departments in the Times' Supplement, a cause of much inconvenience in the present day; but it is not sufficiently known that people troubled with such houses need not advertise them for hire or sale; but should throw themselves with confidence upon their country. Mr. Gregg — previously unknown to Lord Bute — gives him an epistolary review of his early life, marriage and settlement on his country estate, and continues thus: "After some years, I was tempted, as my family was not large, to build a better house than

I found upon the property; but Providence so ordered it, that I had no sooner finished my building and laid out all the ready money I thought I had no occasion for, but my family began to increase, and I have now eight children, my youngest not a year old, without the means of providing for more than three of them."

Mr. Gregg concludes with a touching reference to "the misery of his situation," presenting though it might "all the external appearance of plenty and comfort," and entreats to be recommended to the King for appointment to the first vacancy of a Commissioner of Excise.

The public service, a hundred years ago, enlisted in its cause, with a wise tact, the freshness of youth, and did not scorn the infirmities of age. Sir Charles Hotham writes of a friend "who has had a clerk's place in the Board of Works ever since he was eleven years' old;" while Sir Henry Backer applies for a tide-waitership, on behalf of "a worthy, good man, very infirm in years, and in distressed circumstances." Domestic servants came to glory sometimes in those days. On behalf of one of them, Lord Harcourt applies for "a place of fifty or sixty pounds a year," (about the amount of his wages, apparently,) "which would permit him still to continue in his service."

The importance of the Minister's time is universally and pro-

perly acknowledged by his correspondents. One is glad to see this. "The high and national importance," says one of them, (in a sentence for which we warn the reader to take in a long breath,) "of your lordship's moments are so extremely precious, that I am under every dread and concern in thus breaking in, in the smallest degree, upon them, and heartily pray God, my Lord, that your Lordship's ardent and unwearied attention for the true glory of his Majesty, and the felicity of the kingdom in general, will very shortly confound the devices, and totally put to public shame and contempt every subject in the nation who has, either openly or secretly, opposed your lordship's sentiments, in what every honest, sensible, and disinterested person must be convinced are absolutely pointed to the utility and real interest of the nation in general." One naturally imagines that, after this prelude of long-winded magniloquence, the favour to be asked is a seat in the Cabinet, or at least the governorship of a colony; but — like the man who began by asking the same Minister for a Commissionership of Customs, and gradually reduced his demands down to an old coat — this correspondent (who is a Custom-house officer) simply desires the transfer of his station from Greenock to Edinburgh.

A tendency to beg may have been noticed in the letters from which we have quoted; and may,

by some suspicious persons, be thought to indicate a selfish object in the writers. This is an error; as we see from those letters in which the purpose of the request happens to be carefully defined. Sir Andrew Grant's chief purpose in the occasional craving of a small boon (in which he parenthetically observes he never was successful) has been, he says, "merely to increase his influence and consequence, in order to enable him the more successfully to exert himself in his humble sphere to promote his lordship's popularity." Distinctly, friendship! Sir Alexander Cunningham, in transmitting to the Minister an application for a share in a Government loan, intimates that, in doing so, he is influenced by no thought of premiums or interest, or "any (sic) base mechanical consideration;" for he describes his proposal as the offer of "the mite of an old man towards preventing the ruin of England," Distinctly, patriotism! Mr. Harvey is desirous that the Government appointment, which he is asking for his son, should be in Lord Bute's own "office, in order that he may thus have an opportunity, personally, of showing his gratitude to his benefactor." Indubitable gratitude!

The following proposal for the recreation of the Minister's leisure, during the recess, affords also a pleasing example of the thoughtful consideration of his friends. Mr. Gilbert, on the 22nd May, 1751, writes as follows: "I should

not have ventured to trouble your lordship, had I not been encouraged by the generous protection given to 'The Orphan of China,' which inclines me, as well as the rest of the world, to look upon your lordship as the patron of polite literature" (Mr. Gilbert seems to have belonged to a Syncretic school, and to have written several unacted dramas), "a noble example, much wanted in the present age, though likely to find but few followers. I, therefore, beg the favour of your lordship to give me leave to send you a tragedy, called 'Jugurtha,' which you may take into the country with you to peruse at your leisure."

High among the pleasures of the Cabinet Minister is to be ranked also a continual receipt of crow-quill correspondence from the fair hands of ladies; which was, of course, all flattering and all agreeable. More ingenious than their lords, the ladies do their spiriting gently, and convey their applications in pretty phrases; are endowed, moreover, with delicate end yet unwavering pertinacity — frail as the summer gnats, and, a rude fellow might say, as troublesome — it is not a mere waving of the hand that will divert them from the dance on which they are determined. Lady Mary Coningsby entreats Lord Bute's interest for the appointment of her daughter to be Bed-chamber-woman to the Queen; and, Miss Granville, a Maid of Honour, wants a pension. Miss

Gambrini seeks the honour of occasionally diverting her Majesty "with music," while another lady writes a long letter for the purpose of vindicating her reputation. A duchess, the leader of the *beau monde*, "presumes to give his lordship the trouble of a letter to ask his commands for Scotland, which she will be proud to obey." Her Grace adds a request, quite parenthetically, for the recall to England of a young officer engaged on foreign service, in whom she is extremely interested.

Mrs. Goodrich, sempstress and clear-starcher to the King, has involved herself, apparently, in an elaborate web of discussion, and requires the powers of the state to extricate her. The momentous nature of her wrongs are thus pointedly set forth:—"With regard to the offence laid to my charge by Mrs. Maclure, the lace-woman, of trying to remove her from her place, your lordship will please to judge how far it is in my power to turn out any of her trade, when Mr. Brudend, ever since he was Master of the Robes, has bought all, and only sent me the things to make up. I am informed, likewise, that Mrs. Smith says I intended to take the washing from her. How far this is in my power, your lordship will easily judge." Mrs. Goodrich concludes with eager entreaties for Lord Bute's protection against these nefarious aspersions.

Such are a few of the examples which are afforded by the cor-

respondence of a Premier, conducted a hundred years ago through the medium of his colleague, the Postmaster-General. That the amount of this correspondence cannot have diminished, either in extent or variety, under the overwhelming advantages of the penny postage, since that time, we may be very sure. Whether the severe course of butter and honey, upon which it appears that a Prime Minister is put by the letter-writers of the nation, be not too great a tax on any man's digestion, is a question which we modestly suggest. A Minister, or any other man, who, from his position, may be supposed to possess more than average acuteness and sagacity, might, perhaps, find a flavour better suited to his palate in unostentatious details, plain words, simple claims; and, perhaps, he might digest these all the better if divested of exaggerated compliments, or hyperbolical protestations of respect and veneration. But the Downing Street suppliants, of Lord Bute's time, wrote after what flourish their nature would. We can only hope that the Downing Street suppliants of this time show a better nature, and pour a smaller quantity and a better sort of train-oil on the altars of their Divinities.

A LESSON OF HOPE.

THE stars look'd forth in silent eloquence,

Rife with the secrets of their native regions;

A language seal'd to man's imperfect sense,

But known and spoken by angelic legions.

One walk'd abroad beneath their earnest eyes,

Busied with thoughts that made his features darken;

And whilst he gave them voice without disguise,

The watching spheres seem'd consciously to hearken.

He spoke of life in accents of despair;

Arraign'd it as the teeming source of sorrow;

And, fascinated by the gloom of care,

Saw not Hope pointing to a brighter morrow.

Haply his eye fell on those orbs of light,

Sparkling above him in their placid beauty,

He gazed entranced, as by a spell of might,

And learnt from them the lesson of his duty.

They taught him, with their calm and quiet glance,

To take with patience what the Present yielded;

Trustfully looking into Time's advance

To wrest from Fate the weapon she had wielded.

They bade him bear a stout and manful heart,

For he had sympathy where they were shining;

Thousands were watching how he play'd his part;

Smiled at his smiles, and wept when he was pining.

And thoughtfully he turn'd him to his home;

Yet gleams of cheerfulness with thought were blended;

For he had learnt beneath the star-lit dome

That toiling men by angels' hands are tended.

THE ART OF CATCHING ELEPHANTS.

THE elephant is associated with our earliest recollections of school-boyhood. Well do I remember the huge black picture of the unwieldy animal in Mavor's Spelling Book, the letter-press describing the creature as "not only the largest, but the strongest of all quadrupeds," which is beyond all question; and furthermore, that "in a state of nature, it is neither fierce nor mischievous;" which is the very reverse of fact, as hundreds of sugar and coffee planters, as well as many a traveller, could testify. In later years, I enjoyed a peep at the sleepy-looking creature, cooped up in a sort of magnified horse-stall, at the Zoological Gardens, in the Regent's Park, and well I remember wondering how so much sagacity and thoughtfulness could be attributed to so apathetic and cumbrous an animal.

The reader of Roman and Grecian history may gather how Pyrrhus for a time mastered the hardy veterans of Rome, by means of these then little-known and terrible creatures; and how Alexander found hundreds of them opposed to him in the army of the Indian monarch. Readers of more recent history may learn how these animals formed a portion of the vast armies of most of the Indian Nabobs, with which the British forces came in contact. But twelve short months ago, the elephant graced the civic triumph of the

newly-elected Lord Mayor of London, to the unmitigated astonishment and delight of thousands of little boys and elderly females.

Much, however, as I had heard and read of the elephant, I never properly appreciated this animal, until I had been a dweller in Eastern climes. During a long residence in Ceylon, I was witness of such performances by these huge creatures, that my feeling towards them was raised from that of mere wonder, to something more akin to respect and admiration.

In the course of my early morning rides about the vicinity of Colombo, I frequently reined in my steed to watch the quiet labours of a couple of elephants in the service of the Government. These huge animals were generally employed in the Commissariat timber-yard, or the Civil Engineer's department, either in removing and stowing logs and planks, or in rolling about heavy masses of stone for building purposes. I could not but admire the precision with which they performed their allotted task, unaided, save by their own sagacity. They were one morning hard at work, though slowly, piling up a quantity of heavy pieces of ebony; the lower row of the pile had been already laid down, with mathematical precision, six logs side by side. These they had first rolled in from the adjoining wharf; and, when I rode up, they were engaged in bringing forward the next six for the second row in the

pile. It was curious to observe those uncouth animals seize one of the heavy logs at each end; and, by means of their trunks, lift it up on the logs already placed, and, then arrange it cross-wise upon them with the most perfect skill. I waited whilst they thus placed the third row; feeling a curiosity to know how they would proceed when the timber had to be lifted to greater height. Some of the logs weighed nearly twenty hundred-weight. There was a short pause before the fourth row was touched; but the difficulty was no sooner perceived than it was overcome. The sagacious animals selected two straight pieces of timber, placed one end of each piece on the ground with the other resting on the top of the pile so as to form a sliding way for the next logs; and, having seen that they were perfectly steady and in a straight line, the four-legged labourers rolled up the slope they had thus formed, the six pieces of ebony, for the fourth layer on the pile. Not the least amusing part of the performance was, the careful survey of the pile made by one of the elephants, after placing each log, to ascertain if it were laid perfectly square with the rest.

The sagacity of these creatures in detecting weakness in the jungle-bridges thrown across some of the streams in Ceylon, is not less remarkable. I have been assured that when carrying a load, they invariably press one of their fore-feet upon the earth-

covering of the bridge to try its strength; and, that if it feels too weak to carry them across, they will refuse to proceed until lightened of their load. On one such occasion a driver persisted in compelling his elephant to cross a bridge against the evident wish of the animal; and, as was expected by his comrades, the rotten structure gave way, elephant and rider were precipitated into the river, and the latter was drowned.

Having thus been much prepossessed in favour of these docile creatures, I learnt with considerable interest in the latter part of the year 1849, that an Elephant Kraal was in preparation, in the Western Province of Ceylon, not many miles from Colombo.

The word Kraal signifies simply a trap; inasmuch as the wild elephants are caught by partly driving, and partly enticing them within a large enclosed space, or trap. It is assuredly much safer sport than elephant shooting, and generally attracts a large number of spectators. I may here mention that in spite of the scholastic authority of Mavor's Spelling Book, the wild elephants of Ceylon are far from being "neither fierce nor mischievous." At times they descend upon the low country from their mountain fastnesses in such numbers and with such ferocity, as to carry with them destruction, and often death. Elephant kraals are, therefore, resorted to for the double purpose of ridding a neighbourhood of these dangerous visitors, and sup-

plying the Government with fresh beasts of labour for their timber-yards and building establishments. On these occasions the natives of the district turn out *en masse* — from the rich Modelier to the poorest cooly — to assist without remuneration; all being interested in the success of the affair.

The whole province was alive with excitement: nothing was talked of at mess-table, or at Government House, but the approaching Kraal. Half Colombo, it was said, would be there; and, as the weather promised to be so fair, I could not resist the temptation to witness the trapping of a score or two of those unruly monsters of the forest.

Such excursions are always undertaken by parties of three or more, for the sake of comfort. I joined four friends for the occasion; two gentlemen, and two ladies, mother and daughter. They were well acquainted with the Government agent of the locality; who had promised them shelter, and good accommodation for witnessing the Kraal. All arrangements having been completed, our servants, gaily turbaned, accompanied by a swarm of coolies, bearing provisions, bedding, and other comforts, started off one fine moon-light night; and, at a little before day-break on the following morning, we followed them on the road; the ladies in a small pony-chaise, and myself and friend on our nags. Long before nightfall we

reached the village adjoining the scene of sport. We needed no guide to the locality, for the narrow road was crowded with travellers hastening in one direction. Every description of vehicle lined the way; from the Colonel's light tandem, to the native bullock hackery, with its ungreased squeaking wheels.

The scene at the village was singularly strange and exciting. It was close to the banks of the *Calany*, a river of some size and rapidity. Along the palm-shaded shore were moored numberless boats; many of them large flat country barges, or Padé boats, containing parties of visitors from Colombo; who had prudently determined to take up their abode in those floating residences for the night. The village huts had been thrown open to the English visitors after having been well cleaned and whitewashed. Their doors were gaily ornamented with strips of red and white cloth, flowers, and the fresh pale-green leaves of the cocoa-palm. When the little cottages were lit up for the evening, they looked extremely pretty.

It was at once evident that there was not nearly sufficient accommodation for all the guests. One of our party started in search of his friend, the Government Agent, but in vain; he had gone off in quest of the elephants, reported to be coming up fast from the neighbouring *Korles*, or counties. Consequently we were left to our own resources. After some

delay, we succeeded in obtaining the use of one small room for the ladies; whilst, for ourselves, we sought shelter for the night beneath the friendly and capacious roof of one of the Padé boats, where we found a hearty welcome from a party of young rollicking coffee-planters.

Day had not appeared next morning when we were afoot; and, having sipped a cup of vile half-boiled coffee, we started to explore the wonders of the Kraal; followed, of course, by our servants, with sundry tin boxes and a hamper.

The neighbourhood in which the Kraal was formed, consisted of rugged undulating ground, pretty thickly covered with stout jungle. Heavy, low forest trees studded the stony land, interwoven with thorny brambles, cacti, bamboos, and a species of gigantic creeping plant, called, appropriately, jungle-rope; for it is strong enough to bind the stoutest buffalo that ever roared. A number of narrow paths had been cut through the jungle leading to the Kraal from the village. Through one of these winding, prickly tracks, we bent our slow way, seeing little around us save hugely-branched trees and thickly-matted underwood. Half-an-hour's walk brought us to a halt. We were at the Kraal. I looked around; but, the only indications of the industry of man in that wild spot, were sundry covered platforms, raised amongst the leafy branches of trees, some twelve

feet from the ground. These places contained seats, and were already filling with visitors; we followed the example, and mounting the rude staircase, obtained a good view of what was going on. Before us lay a large open space, in extent about an acre, irregular in shape and of very uneven surface. A few stout trees were standing at intervals within it; beside which were to be seen groups of natives carrying long white wands, for all the world like so many black stewards of some public dinner or ball. Around this plot of ground grew a wall of dense jungle; and, on looking into this, I perceived that it had been made artificially strong by intertwining amongst it the supple branches of trees, long bamboos, and jungle-rope of enormous thickness. At first sight, this natural wall did not appear to be anything more than ordinary jungle; such as might easily be forced by any ordinary village buffalo. We were, however, assured by the native master of the ceremonies, the head *Corale*, that this jungle wall would resist the fiercest attacks of the strongest Kandian elephant. At one end of the enclosure I perceived a narrow opening, partly covered with light brambles and branches of trees. This was the entrance to the Kraal; so arranged as to wear a natural appearance. Beside this carefully concealed gateway were hidden a number of active villagers, ready prepared with huge trunks of trees and jungle-rope;

with which they were to secure the passage against any attempts at return, so soon as the elephants were trapped.

The novelty of our situation; the wild solitude of jungle around us; the picturesque appearance of the many groups of natives within and about the Kraal; the stories of elephant shooting and trapping, and narrow escapes, with sundry references to portly baskets and boxes of provisions; all helped to make the day pass away rapidly and comfortably enough. Evening, however, brought with it a general debate as to what should be done; for there were still no signs of game being near; and few of us desired to spend the night in that open spot, unless under a strong inducement. The discussion ended by an adjournment to the village and the *Padé* boat, where we slept soundly.

The following day was spent pretty much as had been the first. Some of the visitors gave strong signs of impatience; and towards evening, a few, of worse temper than the rest, declared the whole affair a complete take in, and took their departure for Colombo. Just then, intelligence was received, by means of scouts, that the elephants, to the number of forty, were in full march towards the Kraal. This set us all on the tip-toe of expectation. Every one betook himself to his appointed place. Ladies shrank away from the front seats, and I detected one or two of my own sex casting

anxious glances towards the stairs. An equal bustle was visible within the Kraal. The head *Corale* rushed about full of importance; the black stewards, with their white wands, grouped themselves into parties of three or four, at irregular intervals amongst the jungle surrounding the open space, and especially about the entrance; but what duty was to be performed by these gentry, was more than I could divine. It is true (I was told by a native chief) that it would devolve on them to drive back any of the elephants, when caught in the Kraal, in the event of their attempting to force the surrounding defences. But the idea of these poor creatures — some of them mere boys — being of any service, with their little white sticks, appeared so insane and altogether ridiculous, that I felt I was being hoaxed by the *Corale*.

The shades of evening descended, and scouts continued to arrive from the "driving party," with injunctions to hold everything in readiness, for the herd were coming on. The few torches that had been left to dispel the gloom were put out, or removed from sight. The moon had not risen. Every tongue was silent, save a few low whispers at intervals. Eyes were eagerly strained towards the opening through which the herd were expected to rush. Every ear was on the stretch to catch the most remote sounds in that direction. One might have fancied, from the death-like still-

ness of the place, that we were there awaiting our own fate, instead of the fate of elephants.

We did not wait long in this suspense. A distant shouting burst suddenly upon our startled ears. It drew rapidly nearer, and soon we could distinguish the violent cracking and snapping of branches of trees and low jungle. Then we heard the quick tramp of many ponderous and huge feet. There was no doubt but that the animals were close upon us; for torches were visible in the direction from which they were coming: indeed the distant jungle appeared to be alive with lights. Every native stood to his arms, such as they were. I could see the white wands glimmering about in the black forest at our feet: some score or two of rifle-barrels, long and ugly-looking instruments, of native make, were protruded from various points. Several of the ladies of our party fainted; and I verily believe that some of the males wished inwardly that they were of the other sex, to have the privilege of fainting and being carried out of reach of danger. But there was small time for attention, even to fainting ladies. Our eyes were fixed upon the moving and rapidly approaching lights. They appeared to burn less brightly as they came nearer: then some disappeared, and soon the whole were extinguished, and all was plunged in darkness. Still, on came the furious monsters: bamboos crashed; the thick jungle flew about in splinters. A heavy

tramping, and tearing, and snapping asunder of branches, — and there they were safely within the Kraal. Then arose a shout, as though the clouds and earth were about to meet, or to do something out of the common way. I bent forward to catch a peep at the enemy. The native body-guard waved their white wands. The entrance was barred up in a twinkling, and the torches brought forward to enable us to witness the proceedings, when a volley of loud uproarious laughter fell upon our ears, blended with exclamations of angry disappointment. All eyes were strained towards the clump of trees in the centre of the enclosure, where we beheld a dozen or two of flaming *Chules* or torches, waved to and fro by some score of half-frantic villagers; and there, as the glare of torch-light burst through the dense gloom, we beheld, crouching together, in place of forty huge elephants, a knot of village buffaloes, panting, and trembling, and tossing their heads. A survey of those creatures told us how the matter stood. There had been torches fastened to their horns, and one or two of them had the remains of *Chules* hanging to their tails. There could not be a shadow of doubt that the affair had been a cruel hoax, and we were not long in ascribing the origin of it to the real perpetrators — the party of young coffee-planters with whom I had slept in the Padé boat.

The laughter of the evening, however, was not yet at an end.

The light of innumerable *Chules*, now moving about, discovered to us three nervous gentlemen snugly perched high among the branches of a tree close by our stand. They had made a rush up, in the first alarm of the onest; but, however easy fear had made the ascent, they evidently found it a somewhat difficult task to descend. All eyes were at once fixed upon the unlucky climbers, whose struggles to reach the lower branches were hailed with roars of furious laughter. Elephants, and buffaloes, and hoaxers were for the moment forgotten. One of them was the District Judge, a somewhat cumbrous personage; another, was a Collector of Customs, and the third, a Commissioner of the Court of Requests, a thin wiry fellow with a remarkably red face. There they were, kicking, and straining, and struggling, in as pretty a fix as any of the Civil Service had ever found themselves; and it was not until some bamboos and ropes had been handed up to them, that they were able to reach the stand, and thence wend their way off the scene.

By the time the Kraal was cleared, the night was far advanced, and the moon high in the horizon. Advice then reached us that the elephants had made a detour from the line, and had taken it into their unruly heads to treat themselves to a gambol across some score or two of acres of prairie land; where they were amusing themselves with a good round game, despite the coaxing

of a decoy consisting of two tame elephants. It was clear that nothing would be done on that night, and our merry parties betook themselves back to the village.

Our numbers were evidently on the decline next day. The patience of many had been exhausted. Towards evening intelligence was brought in, that thirty-five elephants, of all sizes, were in full march towards us; and, shortly afterwards, the Government Agent of the district, and the native chief of the *Korle*, came in "from the driving," to see that all was made ready for the proper reception of the jungle visitors. Again all was hurry and bustle. Provision-baskets and nervous ladies were sent to the rear: wine-bottles were placed in reserve, and sundry parting salutes were made with packets of sandwiches. Once more silence reigned over the Kraal: torches were removed: the guards and watchers were doubled, and an extra supply of the little white wands brought to the front.

It was about two hours after dark when we heard the first distinct shouts of the drivers, who were slowly forcing the elephants towards the Kraal; the two tame ones leading the way, and pointing out the advantages of that particular path to their jungle friends. Those sounds seemed to approach us at irregular intervals. Sometimes it appeared as though the animals were not to be moved on any account, and the shouting

died away; again they drew rapidly near; then paused; then forward, until we fancied we could distinguish the fall of the elephants' huge feet amongst the thick underwood. At last there was no mistake about it; they were close upon us. Our anxiety and curiosity became intense. The tearing and trampling amongst the jungle was deafening. Giant bamboos and branches of trees appeared to be snapped asunder by the on-coming herd, like so many walking-sticks — in a way, in short, which made me tremble for the strength of the Kraal, and of our own elevated platform.

But there was little time for reflection of any kind. A shot or two was fired in the rear of the advancing herd, followed by a trampling of the leading elephant. The moon at that moment began to peep over the distant range of low hills; and, by its faint light, I could distinguish the low jungle bending, and giving way on every side, and amongst it sundry huge black forms ruhing about in savage disorder, like mountain masses upheaved by some convulsion of nature. The two decoys entered the enclosure at a brisk but steady trot, and stationed themselves under the clump of trees, without any notice being taken of them; indeed, one of them nodded knowingly to the *Corale* near him, as much as to say, "It's all right, old fellow!" On came the wild elephants at a thundering pace, tearing and bending, and smashing

everything before them; trumpeting and roaring at full pitch. In another moment they were within the boundaries of our fortress.

Never shall I forget the wild, strange beauty of that uproarious moment. The moon was now shining sufficiently on the Kraal to light up the more open parts of it; away under the deep shade on one side, could be seen a dense, moving mass of living creatures; huge, misshapen, and infuriated, trembling with rage and fatigue. Lighted *chules* were gleaming thickly, like fire-flies, amidst the neighbouring jungle. Felled trees and rope barred up the narrow way, forming one monster gate; whilst busy groups of villagers, white wands in hand, moved to and fro, and watched the furious herd. More lights were brought to the front, and a blazing fire was kindled outside the entrance, which, whilst it served to light up the whole of the Kraal, deterred the savage strangers from attempting anything in that direction.

It was soon evident that the prisoners were not going to take matters very quietly. Two of the stoutest of their number slowly advanced and examined the walls, to see where an opening might most easily be forced. And now we were not less astonished than delighted at the use made of those tiny white wands, which had before served only to raise our contempt. Wherever the two elephant spies approached the jungle-walls of their prison, they were

met by one or two villagers, who gently waved before them little snow-white switches; and, lo! as if by some spell of potent forest magic, the beasts turned back, skinking from contact with the little wands. Point after point was thus tried, but all in vain; the snowy magic sticks were thick within the jungle, and silently beat back the advancing foe.

While the two scouts were thus engaged on their exploring expedition, the tame elephants approached the remainder of the herd, and walked slowly round them, shaking their shaggy ears, and waving high in air their curling trunks, as though they would say, "Move at your peril." One of the captives, a somewhat juvenile and unsophisticated elephant, ventured to move from the side of its maternal parent, to take a survey of our stand, when tame elephant Number One went up to the offender, and sent him back with an enormous flea in his ear; tame elephant Number Two bestowing at the same moment a smart tap on the skull.

Busier work was at hand. The scouts, evidently disgusted with the result of their operations upon the outworks, appeared to be preparing for a *sortie*, and treated with the most reckless levity the admonitory taps of the elephant policemen; which, however, seemed to be far less unpleasant to them than a tickle on the snout from one of the pigmy white wands. It was plain that they intended to carry their object by a

coup de trunk; but a score of rifles peered forth. The ladies shut their eyes, and stopped their ears: an elderly gentleman, at my elbow, asked, in a tremulous whisper, "what the guns were for?" The inquiry was replied to by a loud trumpeting from one of the pair of rebels, — a harsh screaming roar, like the hollow sound of a strained railway whistle, very much out of repair. We had scarcely time to look at the poor brute creating this disturbance, when we heard the sharp crack of a dozen rifles around us — so sharp, indeed, that our eyes blinked again. Down tumbled one of the monsters, with thick torrents of hot, savage blood, pouring from many a wound about his head and neck. His companion was not so easily disposed of, though badly wounded. Lifting his enormous trunk in the air, and bellowing forth a scream of defiance, he made a rush at the jungle-wall. The two elephantine policemen, who had been narrowly observing his proceedings, then cut in between him and the ramparts, and succeeded in turning him from his purpose; but only to cause him to renew his fierce attack upon another part of the defences. He rushed, at full speed, upon the part where our stand was erected, screaming and tearing up the earth, and lashing his great trunk about him, as a schoolboy would a piece of whipcord. I felt alarmed. It seemed as though our frail tenement must yield at the first touch from the mighty on-coming

mass of flesh, bone, and muscle. Ladies shrieked and fainted by the dozen: gentlemen scrambled over each other towards the stairs, where a decidedly downward tendency was exhibited. I would have given a trifle, just then, to have taken the seat occupied the day before by the Judge or the Collector, high amongst the branches. But in much less time than I take to relate it, the furious animal, smarting under many bullet wounds, had reached the verge of our stand, heedless of the cracking of rifles, whose leaden messengers flew round his head and poured down his shoulders, harmless as peas. One last crack, and down the monster fell, close at our feet. That shot was the work of a mere lad, the little son of a Kandian *Corale*; who, coolly biding his time, had fired his piece close at the creature's ear. Leaping from his place, the urchin flung aside his long tapering rifle, and drawing forth his girdle-knife, severed the elephant's tail from the carcase, as his just trophy.

These two having been disposed of, and a degree of calm restored, the general attention was directed towards the herd, which still remained in their original position. For a time fear seemed to hold them motionless; but when the extremity of their danger rose before them, a number of the boldest made a desperate rush at the entrance, but were easily turned back, when the watchers stirred up the great guard-fire, whilst, from other parts of the Kraal, they

were soon repelled by an application of white wands. In this way a good hour was spent, at the end of which time the creatures appeared to give up the idea of any further aggressive proceedings, and remained subdued and calm.

A dangerous task had still to be performed — that of securing the best of the herd for taming. Half-a-dozen of the most active and skilful of the villagers crept slowly and carefully towards the frightened group; each having a long stout cord of jungle-rope in his hand, with a running noose at one end of it. With stealthy, cat-like steps, these daring fellows went amongst the herd, making some of us tremble for their safety. Each of them selected one of the largest and strongest of the group, behind which they crept, and, having arranged the "lasso" for action, they applied a finger gently to the right heel of their beast, who feeling the touch as though that of some insect, slowly raised the leg, shook it, and replaced it on the ground. The men, as the legs were lifted, placed the running nooses beneath them, so that the elephants were quietly trapped, unknown to themselves, and with the utmost ease. The men now stole rapidly away with the ends of the ropes, and immediately made them fast to the ends of the nearest trees. These ropes, however, were far from being sufficiently strong to hold an elephant who might put out his strength. It was therefore necessary to secure

them still further, but by gentle means. The two tame elephants were then placed on active service: they were evidently perfectly at home, and required no directions for their work. Walking slowly up to the nearest of the six captured animals, they began to urge him towards the tree to which he was fastened. At first the creature was stubborn; but a few taps on his great skull, and a mighty push on his carcase, sent him a yard or two nearer his destination. As he proceeded, the man in charge of the rope gathered in the slack of it; and so matters went on between this party — a tap, a push, and a pull — until at length three of the elephants were close to the tree. Two other villagers then came forward with a stout iron chain. The tame animals placed themselves one on each side of their prisoner, pressing him between them so tightly as to prevent the possibility of his moving. In a minute or two the great chain was passed several times round the hind legs and the tree; and, in this way the captive was left; helpless and faint with struggling. The other five were similarly treated. After which our party dispersed, pretty well tired, and quite prepared for bed.

Early next morning I paid a last visit to the Kraal, alone; my friends were fairly worn out. The remainder of the elephants had been either shot or had forced their way out in one or two places. The six captured animals were quiet — as well they might be,

after their long fast and incessant struggling. Towards the end of that day, a very small portion of food was supplied to them, just sufficient to keep them alive. In this way they were to remain for a week or two, when, if found sufficiently reduced in strength and temper, they were to be walked about, fastened between two tame companions, who assisted very effectually in their daily education — not, perhaps, in the most gentle and polite manner, but still much to the purpose.

At the end of two or three months, the wild and unruly destroying monster of the jungle might be seen quietly and submissively piling logs of ebony in the Government timber-yards, with a purpose-like intelligence little short of that of man.

A CHRISTMAS PIECE.

MASTER PILBY is a dunce. He returned from school four days ago, bringing a right hand with him that was ink-stained on the thumb and two forefingers to the second knuckle. By aid of pumice-stone, he has almost contrived to rub his little fingers white again, since he has been told that he must hold a tidy hand out to be shaken by aunts, uncles, and friends this Christmas. Bruises have faded also from his person, and a joyous inn of rest, after six months of jolting on the road to knowledge, is the poor little dunce's Christmas.

It wants an hour to dinner-time on Christmas-day, and children play about the garden-walks, noisy with health, ruddy with constant running through the clear cold air. Miss Lizzie, a sporting character of nine years old, with a fine silken mane of her own, wishes to know who will be her horse. "I want somebody who's quick," says the fast young damsel; I'll have Tommy Pilby." Now it will be seen that, although Master Pilby, considered as a grammarian, was slow, yet was he quick and lively when considered as a horse, or, generally speaking, as a playfellow. Subjected now, therefore, to the coercion of a pair of packthread reins, and whipped severely with a lash of worsted, he is scampering and curvetting in an extraordinary manner, with Miss Lizzie at his heels, along the carriage-drive. Now near the gate, while he is forcing a whole Christmas-load of happiness into a tremendous neigh, he is confronted by a guest, no less portentous than his terrible head master. Pilby may hesitate, Miss Lizzie, with inflamed ambition, shouts as the Doctor bursts upon her, "Here's a big horse!" With astonishment does Master Pilby see the Doctor yield to the solicitations of the little maid, and thrust his arms into the noose removed from his own now liberated person. But there is a joyousness about the face of Dr. Grum which there is no distrusting, and he gives the little dunce a cheery greeting, as

he lumbers off clumsily enough, in answer to the "Come up!" of his mistress. But Miss Lizzie soon cries out that he is very stupid, and advertises to her playfellows that there is a horse to be disposed of. Master Pilby answers the advertisement, and joyously assumes the reins; the Doctor prances; Pilby lays about his portly person the innocuous whip, and shouts at him impatiently, "How slow you are!" The bell sounds through the garden, and the dunce and the dominie caper together in the direction of their Christmas dinner.

Elsewhere, at the same hour, a door in town is knocked at modestly by a young man, whose faded suit of black has been put on with care and neatly brushed, who has evidently laboured at his toilet to produce the utmost attainable demonstration of respectability out of the materials in his possession. To-day, if Dr. Grum were passing, he would take his usher lovingly by the hand; on any other day a friendly, condescending nod would be the Doctor's greeting. But there is one within this house who has been listening this half-hour for that modest little knock, and the poor usher knows well who is opening the door, and who it is that would kiss him as heartily as she now does every day, though every day were dreary for a thousand years, if they could live as long, and be together.

But, lest a servant come, they must not linger too long in the

hall. On any other day Papa might frown; Mamma might fret at the unprofitable match: but when they see the deep joy in their daughter's eyes, they whisper by looks to one another, that, after all, it is God's Christmas-day, and brighten the modest face of the poor usher with the affection of their welcome.

When they will marry, they commit to Him who holds love blessed to determine; but in a quiet room apart from all the Christmas guests, the maiden tells the usher how two months ago she made as many notches in a card as there were days till Christmas, and tore one off daily when she went to bed, and how her heart beat when there came to be but four — three — two; and how she prayed and feared lest accident might disappoint her when there was but one. What the usher told the maiden in reply, her heart retains to feast upon until there shall return another Christmas-day.

Here is a grand ball in the country workhouse, and your Polish balls are nothing to it! All the parish schoolboys and school-girls have been botanizing for a whole week, and the white-washed walls of the schoolroom are superb with holly, and festoons of winter foliage and flowers. The meat is to be got over; never mind the meat — "Please, Sir, may we give three cheers when the pudding comes?" No wonder they can dance; and what a lucky thing it is that schoolmaster knows how

to play the fiddle! The men and women and the old crones come in, and Christmas-day, by order of the Board of Guardians, is celebrated by a workhouse ball. Real negus is served out, and the convivialities are so kept up, that the very children do not go to bed till half past nine o'clock.

How is it with the faint-hearted little diners in the dingy room, who keep their Christmas-day at the twenty pound schools where there are no vacations? Who shall peep into the mystery?

But at Dr. Trout's, which is quite another sort of place, we know how it is. Dr. Trout and Mrs. Trout have thirteen children of their own, and a fine flourishing school into the bargain. They dine at home on Christmas-day, surrounded by old pupils and hearty friends. And there are some of those old pupils whose race in the world has caused them to become wiser, even in his own way, than the simple-hearted Doctor, and a great deal wiser in the way of what the world calls wisdom. But none of those whom he has taught regard him as an equal; all look affectionately up. Very little can a man be conscious of the worth, for good or evil, of his own mind, who does not feel something that is very earnest in the presence of another, who, whether for good or evil, has exerted a large influence upon his character. Nothing but good was ever attributed to Dr. Trout; and, therefore, his old pupils look up to him with reverent affection,

Perhaps somewhat less Greek and Latin, with a little more French, German, and Italian, would have been more practically useful in the well-remembered lessons. But, never mind what the pupils learnt, if they learnt only to study and to teach themselves as they grew older. That the old Doctor taught, and taught it kindly, too: for that they loved him. What a magnificent speech the young Barrister is making, who proposes bumpers for a toast! He is a fine young fellow; and, whatever tears he may weep, hereafter, for a fee, there is a true tear of Christmas love and kindness sparkling about his eyelash, as he proceeds, through a storm of applause, to eulogize "our dear old Teacher." Then the old Doctor rises to reply; and he must be seized with a demon — the good demon of Christmas — for he can only look utter benevolence, and stammer out, "God bless you all! I'm very happy."

Miss Twit sits at the hostess's right hand, beside a quieter, but not less friendly board. She is thin, pale, bordering on fifty. There is a sweet smile upon her face; she is inexpressibly lady-like and quiet; but, in her quietness, one feels a touch of resignation. She has but one relation, who is rich, and does not encourage her intimacy. She keeps a school; and is now dining with the parents of her eldest pupil. A very pretty, unaffected, clever girl that eldest pupil seems to be; and she sits by the schoolmistress,

lovingly watchful of her wants, and forcing all good things upon her plate with child-like assiduity. It is the belief of her pupils that Miss Twit has had some great grief; and the young ladies, of course, interpret that into the fact, that she has had a lover who has died — or something of that sort; but, of course, it had to do with love. And if she had a lover ever, the young ladies say, how wonderfully she must have loved him, because they never hear her speak an unkind word of any one; and she seems to have, in all her quietness, such energy for being good and tender, that they suppose he must have died; for nobody able to love as Miss Twit must have done, could ever possibly have been deserted. So the girls think of the schoolmistress so tenderly, that it would not cost even a vixen much pains to think, in return, tenderly of them. Nor are the parents, generally speaking, less solicitous about the gentle lady, who is so attentive to their girls. Miss Twit, although quiet, will by no means be a dummy, when the curtains shall be drawn to-night, and the lamp lighted, and the parlour games begin. She is the great authority on forfeits; she knows more riddles than an elephant can carry, and they are not prim, stiff-backed things, but they have all quaint, easy answers, meant to make you laugh. As a stage-manager over the performance of acted charades, she is the wittiest and cleverest, and dearest creature, all

her pupils say. Miss Twit creates marvels of happiness without much outward variation from her gentle quiet way. And those who make a happy Christmas are the folks to feel the Christmas peace; and so we need not pity Miss Twit as she sits at dinner, by the right hand of the hostess, under her eldest pupil's very busy care.

Dame Farran gets but twopence a week from the little boys and girls who learn of her what nouns are, and how much is eight times nine. The poor dame cannot see without her spectacles, and she needs them to see her Christmas mutton-chop. A tap at the door disturbs her while she is turning it over the fire, and a little fellow with "Please, Ma'am, mother's love," produces a plate-full of roast goose. The mutton-chop is put by for to-morrow; and it had not reached the cupboard, before another "Mother's love" does homage to the teacher of the children, with an offering of pudding. Then there is a little rain of "Mother's love" at two o'clock; one drop is goose; two, beef; and four, pudding. Dame Farran had resolved to sit at home and think about a son far out at sea, but she could not escape the Christmas hospitality.

With whom does the French Usher dine? or does he sit at home before a sheet of writing paper, and pour love, not upon it — upon the mother or the sister vividly presented to his mind? Has he received a Christmas greeting from his distant home,

which lies before him on thin rustling paper, rustling with his frequent touch, as he reads and re-reads tender words, the dew so rarely falling on his soul? Does he sit by the fire after dinner with a portrait in his hand? Does he think of a pair of blue eyes that may be bent elsewhere over a picture of himself, thinking of him as a something glorious and noble, not the mean, friendless being he is sometimes thought to be while following his daily task in England?

We are all teachers. The baby who can only lisp, has truths to teach to an attentive pupil. We are all teachers, and we are all taught, or should let ourselves be taught. A glorious Holiday in the great School of the World is Christmas-day, when, though there be teaching, still every hard task is thrust into a corner, every birch is locked up in a cupboard; and the one lesson of the day which we agree not to put from us, and even to fetch down from the shelf and learn afresh, if we should chance of late to have forgotten it, is how to make peace on earth; how to be proud enough to forgive, and humble enough to consent to be forgiven.

THE FIVE TRAVELLERS.

Look at the map, and see what a narrow slip of land unites the North and South Americas, and drives the mariner, in proceeding from the Atlantic to the Pacific

Ocean, round the icy stormy seas of Cape Horn! Since the days of the buccaneers, the overland track had been almost abandoned by Europeans, until the discovery of the gold of California made a short cut indispensable; and we wonder that it was not abandoned, since never, within so narrow a space, have more fearful physical difficulties been interposed.

In October last, as recently recorded in the daily papers, fierce disputes, ending in a murderous onslaught, took place between the native Indian boatmen at the town of Chagres, on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus of Panama, and the Anglo-American boatmen. The latter were desirous of monopolising the profit of conveying passengers to the Mail steamers; and, finding themselves under-bid by the more civil and less extravagant Indians, they proceeded, according to the maxims of Judge Lynch, to put down the opposition, by firing on and killing several Indians. The Spanish-Indian population had possession of the fort which commanded the opposite side of the river where the Americans were encamped; and, were about to pour upon the marauders a point-blank fire of artillery, when, fortunately, the captain of the British Mail steamer "Medway" sent his boats on shore, armed, to protect British subjects. Through this intervention, a truce was patched up between the hostile parties.

While the officer commanding the boats was engaged in this dif-

ficult task, his protection was claimed by five individuals; whose torn and travel-stained half-Spanish, half-English costume, and whose uncombed, unshaven, weary, excited, and haggard faces, gave them more the appearance of banditti than honest travellers. They had been seized by the natives as Anglo-Americans, and were in danger of losing their lives in expiation of the murders committed by ruffians of that nation. Fortunately, they spoke Spanish fluently; and their explanations, backed by the officer of the "Medway," released them, and placed them safe on board the Mail steamer.

This party consisted of Mr. Young, secretary of Admiral Moresby, commanding the Pacific Fleet; Mr. Blanshard, late Governor of Vancouver's Island; Captain Stanley Carr, formerly of Holstein, returning from Port Philip, Australia; and two servants. These gentlemen having arrived a few days previously at Panama, as fellow-passengers in one of the Pacific steamers from Guayaquil, (after a tour through and along the South American coast), had arranged to join company in a party across the Isthmus. Had they been less pressed for time, they would have remained some time at the city of Panama, which is not only one of the most beautiful — but, in direct contrast to Chagres, one of the healthiest — ports of South America.

At Panama, Mr. Perry, a rela-

tive of the celebrated Perry of the *Morning Chronicle*, is British Consul, respected and trusted by all nations. Before his house, with no other protection than the British flag waving over it, the travellers saw what looked like a pile of bricks — it was a pile of bars of silver worth two million of dollars!

The first care of our travellers was to engage mules for the land journey of twenty-six miles to the town of Cruces; and here they made the mistake of dealing with a fellow of the name of Joy, an Englishman, instead of with one of the natives, as the latter would have supplied much better animals at a much cheaper rate. Joy's mules, for the hire of which he charged an ounce of gold, turned out wretched brutes. On the following day, they set out over what was once a road, constructed, and in many places hewn through solid rock, by the old Spaniards; but which, under the perpetual contests and chronic feebleness of the South American Republics, has decayed into a mule-track, encumbered with enormous rocks, interrupted by quagmires, and almost perpendicular precipices: so narrow that, in many places, only one loaded mule can pass at a time; bordered on both sides by forests of tropical trees, shrubs, and creepers, so dense that it is impossible to penetrate, for even a few feet, without cutting the way with an axe. Along this execrable road they proceeded beneath a tropical sun; the damp atmosphere

laden with vegetable miasma, the thermometer at ninety degrees of Fahrenheit; the wretched mules, struggling along, often falling; some dying. It was like travelling in the atmosphere of the great Palm-house at Kew. Indeed, the plants which formed the boundary line on either side, included many of the most rare, costly, and beautiful of those raised with great difficulty in English glass-houses. As the party crept through a narrow defile, Captain Carr riding first, and the rest forming a long straggling line behind him, a tall lantern-jawed Yankee, in a broad-brimmed hat, and a blanket coat, with a sabre in his hand, stepped out into the middle of the road, and asked the "stranger" if five Britishers had left Panama that morning? "Oh yes!" Captain Carr promptly replied, for he saw several gun-barrels peeping out of the thicket, "we are looking out for them." "That be hanged!" replied the fellow, "you go ahead! we don't go shares with any one." Nothing loath at being so easily mistaken for a Californian robber, Captain Carr spurred his jaded mule, and pushed on; his party followed, one by one, and passed unquestioned. Had they been all together, or less hairy and dirty, they would, unquestionably, have been robbed, if not murdered. What the Rhine was to the German barons of old, the Isthmus of Panama is to disappointed Californians. They take up a position, and levy toll on the gold-carriers,

After this providential escape, the travellers rode on; until compelled, by the exhausted state of their mules, to halt within ten miles of Cruces, and to put up for the night at a *rancho*, or Indian farm. They piled their baggage outside, under charge of the Indian muleteers, and retired to rest in grass hammocks. They were too hot, too much annoyed with insects, and too tired, to sleep much. The walls of the *rancho* were composed of a sort of thatch. A mat hung over each of two door-ways. About the middle of the night Mr. Young heard some one inquiring in Spanish of the muleteers, how many Englishmen were in the hut. He immediately struck a light, awaked his companions, and sallied out at one door, with a revolver in his right hand, and a sword in his left; while Captain Carr sallied out at the other door, calling on the *ladrones* very energetically to come on and have a *good meal* of fighting if they were in the humour; but the inquisitive gentlemen fled into the darkness of the forest, without even pausing to return two shots which were fired after them by way of parting salute. The next morning the party set out again, reached Cruces, and there hired a boat with a crew, to row them to Chagres. Here, again, they committed a serious error, in engaging a large heavy wooden boat, large enough to convey the whole party, instead of two of the light canoes of the country.

They set out; the rainy season had commenced; the river was rising from the effects of a thunder-storm higher up. They were late in the year, and no one seemed taking the passage. At Cruces they saw a number of unhappy mortals in the last stage of exhaustion; victims of the poisonous malaria of Chagres, being carried in litters in the vain hope of being restored by the purer atmosphere of Panama.

The master of the boat, an Indian, with three others, rowed the English travellers down the river Cruces at a steady pace, assisted by the current. They sat under a thatched roof of palm-leaves, admiring the rich variety of vegetation that fringed both sides of the broad stream, and the gorgeous tropical birds that flew or floated across the waters: thinking their troubles at an end. But it was not so designed. Presently the boat struck upon the huge half-sunk tree; a "snag," the Americans call it.

The bows passed over, the stern stuck fast and tilted up, the fore-part of the boat filled with water. For hours, they laboured, endeavouring to bade out the water and get clear of the snag; but their efforts were fruitless, and they became exhausted under a burning perpendicular sun. Half dead with thirst, they were unable to use the waters of the river, which recent rains had rendered not only turbid, but almost fetid with the decayed vegetable matter and mould of the banks. It

became evident that the moment the boat slipped off the snag, she would sink like lead. No sign of habitation was to be seen on either shore, each distant about half a mile. At length the owner of the boat, in despair, determined to swim to land, and try if he could obtain help, although, from the denseness of the forest, it seemed a vain hope. He sprang into the river, which was running at the rate of nearly ten knots an hour: swimming as only an Indian can swim. They watched him with their glasses until he reached the shore, apparently much exhausted, caught hold of the branches of a drooping tree, and then, the forest being too close for him to penetrate, crept away on his hands and knees along the shallow margin, disappeared, and was never seen more. No doubt he was devoured by alligators; for, shortly afterwards, a crowd of these disgusting creatures surrounded the boat, poking against it with their blunt muzzles, and looking as if they made quite sure of an early meal from its contents.

In this fearful position — at a time when there seemed no hope of rescue — a very small canoe, paddled by two boys, conveying a young Indian girl, came gliding down the stream. As soon as the girl saw the state of affairs, she landed at the nearest open ground and sent the canoe, which was only capable of holding two in addition to the boys, to the rescue.

When the canoe came alongside the boat, a contest arose among the Englishmen, not as to who should go first, but who should go last. Mr. Young and Mr. Blanshard insisted that as Captain Carr was much their senior, it was right that he should have the first chance of safety. On the other hand, Captain Carr maintained that, independently of Mr. Young's character as bearer of the despatches, it was better that those who had many years unexpended should survive, than one who, in the natural course of events, had seen a large share of life; besides, he could swim, and they could not. Captain Carr carried his point — a very important point, too; for, it seemed probable that when part of the passengers were removed, the boat would slide off the snag and sink, leaving the occupants the two chances of being drowned or devoured. The Indians pressed forward to escape as soon as possible; but Robinson, Mr. Blanshard's servant, declared he would stick to the boat as long as Captain Carr did, and would not leave without him! — a trait of manly gallantry which deserves record. At length all were landed safely on the little promontory, with a small portion of the baggage. The rest, including a series of manuscript journals, (Captain Carr's Journeys through the three Colonies of Australia,) went to the bottom as soon as the last man stepped out of the boat.

As they landed, they were re-

ceived by their preserver, the Indian girl, whose beauty, independently of the great service she had rendered, made the term "guardian angel" no exaggeration. Although already a wife and mother, she was scarcely more than sixteen years old; below the middle height; perfectly proportioned; with regular Grecian features, most exquisite hands and feet, dark deep melting eyes, and a profusion of glossy black hair, which flowed over her shoulders beneath a broad-leaved Panama hat, trimmed with blue ribands. Her dress consisted of a robe of gay striped muslin, with a thin petticoat, open at the throat, and descending half-way down her bare statuesque legs. Her complexion was scarcely darker than that of an Italian.

She was sitting, cross-legged, on the ground when they landed, smoking a cigarette; but rose to receive them with the grace of a princess; condoled with them on the loss of their valuables, and conducted them to her farm, after having sent for her husband; who was working about a mile off.

As they walked up towards the farm, a little naked boy, about three years old, ran out to meet his mother; and, after embracing her, asked and enjoyed, with all the relish of an English child for lollipops, a smoke of his mother's cigarette.

Mr. Young, zealous to lose no time in delivering his despatches, hired a small canoe, and proceeded, in spite of the danger of

night travelling, up the river in search of a canoe large enough to convey the party to Chagres. In this attempt he was successful: and the next day they arrived at the "Plague City" of the Atlantic; where the white inhabitants may be divided into three classes: strangers just arrived, the dying, and the dead. In the morning you are quite well; at mid-day you feel a little sick; at midnight you are buried. This is literal truth. After narrowly falling victims to the natives, justly provoked by the barbarous assassinations committed by the Anglo-Americans, they safely reached the deck of the "Medway," and, with the help of soap, water, razors, and decent garments, recovered the appearance of civilised beings.

At Chagres, the railway works were suspended in consequence of the rainy season. The piles driven for the purpose of carrying the permanent way through some miles of swamp, seemed already rotting.

The above account has been communicated by a passenger, who had frequent conversations with the travellers.

AN ENGLISHMAN'S CASTLE.

THOUGH every English house-keeper is said to be, and is, in the eye of the law, theoretically at least, the lord of a castle, I should like to know how many times out of ten, the lawful master of the

house — the payer of rent and taxes — may be the real lord, enjoying all the rights and privileges, the security, the tranquillity, which might be supposed to be comprised in the idea of a castle. And how many times an exaggerated respect for the liberty of another, to whom he has alienated a tithe of his home, makes his house no longer his, but his lodger's castle. And how often it is his wife's castle, or his friend's, or relations' castle; and how often he is subjected to such annoyances, from within and without, as make it, in these days when the law no longer recognises the lord's right to project a domestic disturber from an engine, or to stand at a loop-hole, and pick off besiegers with a cross-bow, only a keen satire to remind him of the maxim. If there were any chance of getting them filled up honestly, I would like to have schedules, with columns for every one of these questions, left at every castle in the kingdom, on a certain day. A blue book might be the result, which should give to the foreigner a correct notion of the English home, called, with self-glorification, a Castle.

Ask my old school-fellow, Knightbell, who is in the unhappy position of the hare in the fable — having many friends — and who deserts a comfortable home, (where his own numerous family, besides some of his relations by marriage, make his happiness their constant study), to consume the midnight oil over *Thompson's Practice of Obstetric Physic*, in an in-

hospitable chamber, in a house in R—cq—t Court. I have a sincere esteem for Knightbell, and I know what he has undergone. No sum of money, no friendly desire to remove the unfounded suspicions of his amiable wife; no incentive, short of racks and thumbscrews, applied in the darkest dungeons of the Inquisition, amid the shrieks and demoniac laughter of other tortured victims; should ever induce me to insert the three vowels which are necessary to complete the name of his place of retreat. Only myself, and a trusty and devoted retainer—who knows where to find his master when certain events, which *will* take place at uncertain hours, require his prompt attendance—could make that name intelligible to the public. We are the sole depositaries of his secret; and, unless Mrs. K. should, Dalilah-like, wheedle it from him in a moment of fondness and confidence; or, unless one of my friend's most persevering of button-holders, under the direction of a clairvoyant, and guided by a bloodhound, should track his footsteps to R—cq—t Court; it will remain for ever unknown to the world! It is vain to say that my friend might, by a determined exercise of the will, have secured that peace and tranquillity at home, which he is now compelled to seek beside a solitary hearth, and in a stranger's dwelling. If you do not happen to be one of the many friends alluded to, making that remark in keen derision, I reply that it is impossible to

imagine what you would do in any man's situation, unless you can fully identify yourself with that man, and take into account the whole of the circumstances in which he is placed. Poor K., who endured much, and long, before he suffered himself to be goaded into the step which I have described, is of a gentle and amiable disposition; but his household, I regret to say, is not in that state of order which can only be insured by unity in the directorship.

Again: I know another gentleman, whose name I am not at liberty to publish. If you were to call upon him (supposing you knew his name and address), and casually, in the course of conversation, were to say (admitting you were sufficiently intimate with him to make a familiar observation of the kind), "an Englishman's house is his castle;" would that seem to him other than a bitter sarcasm? Might we not expect that his eye would fix itself upon you, with the intensity of a basilisk's; that his nostril would dilate; that his lip would curl; that his brow would darken; in short, that his whole countenance would undergo a rapid transformation. His story is pretty well known, but it may be told in a few words. On a windy afternoon, in the month of March, 1848, shortly after the occurrence of those important events in France, which drove the King of the French an exile (with an assumed name) to the shores of England, a gentleman—whose beard and moustache betrayed his for-

eign origin — proceeded, followed by a porter bearing a carpet-bag, through a retired and quiet street in the neighbourhood of Soho Square. From his glancing alternately at every house on each side of the way, it might have struck the casual observer, that he was seeking for some particular house, in a street whose doors had been numbered according to the independent whim of various proprietors; or that, knowing no number, he sought, by an effort of memory, to recall the outward characteristics of a house that he had visited long ago — perhaps in the sunny time of boyhood. But, upon more careful observation, it would have been seen, that he did not stay to look above the knockers, nor did he glance upward to take into his eye the general appearance of each house, but merely gave a hurried look at the ground-floor windows, and passed on.

Such a course readily suggested to a thoughtful mind that he was seeking a lodging. He stopped at last before a house having the words "Furnished Apartments to let," in the window, and "Mr. —, architect," upon the door. He knocked, entered, and saw the architect (whose name, I have before said, I am not at liberty to publish); the apartments were taken, references were given; two months' trial showed the lodger to be a man of quiet habits; and, subsequently the architect's first floor was let to the foreigner (who, by the way, was said to be a noble-

man in his own country) for a term of three years certain. Up to this point there is every reason to believe that the proceedings of the foreigner were taken in a *bonâ fide* spirit. Time rolled on. They were now at the end of June, in the same year, a period at which an unsuccessful insurrection in the French capital, besides certain reactionary measures in other parts of the Continent, had sent another wave of foreign immigration to break upon our shores. One afternoon another foreigner knocked at the architect's door; he was enveloped in a singular garment, which appeared to the English eye to partake equally of the natures of a coat and a cloak, being fantastically braided in front, and ornamented behind with a large hood, shaped like a heart, and lined with crimson. A tall man, bearing a case, which appeared to contain a violoncello, or some other bulky musical instrument, was beside him. The foreign nobleman met him upon the threshold, uttered a cry of mingled surprise and delight, flung himself into his arms, and embraced him with fervour, to the great astonishment of an unmarried lady, who resided, with a parrot, in the parlours of the opposite house. The rest is easily narrated — it is an oft-repeated tale. The first floor of the architect's (hitherto) unassuming home was brilliantly illuminated every evening; numbers of foreigners passed up the stairs, and were never seen to come down again by the last per-

son retiring to bed in the architect's family. Mingled sounds of many voices and instruments (in which the deep tones of the violoncello were always predominant) were heard by the architect, his family, and every one else in the street. The architect remonstrated with the foreign nobleman; who declined to restrict the amusements of his friend, to whom, he said, he was indebted for the life of an only sister, once saved by his intrepidity in stopping the horses of her carriage, which were fast hurrying her towards a precipice. The landlord offered a compromise, in vain; wrote to the "Times" newspaper, and applied to a magistrate. The latter told him there was no remedy, and the proverb about an Englishman's castle, turned out to be "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

The story may be a trite one; but it is only the more powerful against the proverb. I could multiply instances of a less adventitious character. Moreover, it is not because the Englishman does not live in a great house, with a hundred other people, and consign the key of his chamber to the hands of a prying porter, that he enjoys more privacy or tranquillity than the Frenchman. It is not because the Englishman has a street door, and the Frenchman has none, that the former is more free from disturbance and annoyance. Nay, the street door is itself, instead of being a protection, a positive source of annoyance. If I had no street door, could people come

knocking and kicking against it all day to know if I want a doormat, a rope of onions, a "History of England," a "Family Devotion," "Views of Palestine," coming out in sixpenny parts, specimens of drapery which "I needn't pay for, at present," crockery, a box of steel-pens, matches, a Dutch clock, a paper of needles; or to know whether I have any old clothes to exchange for money, or plates and dishes, or geraniums (with no roots to them); or any old umbrellas, or bottles, or bones? If I had any rags to sell; or knives or scissors to grind? There is a good deal of timber about my house, which conducts the sound, and my hearing is painfully acute. No part of my premises is sufficiently remote from the street door to protect me from these noises. I sit up stairs, and hear these calls: many a time clenching my teeth, and muttering bitter things of my disturbers — things which, methinks, they would hardly like to hear.

H. (whose case lately came under my notice) has to thank his living in an English Castle, with a massive knocker, for being disturbed at his studies the other night, while his servant had gone for the trimestrial holiday. Now if he had lived in France, and instead of enjoying the hollow boast of being the master of the house, he had been content to merge his individuality in the joint-tenantship of something like a castle, with a porter to guard the gate, and to hold a preliminary parley

with all intruders, he would not have been tempted to indulge in that hasty exclamation upon throwing down his book: he would have been spared the humiliation of answering, in person, a summons at his own street door: he would not have been startled by a blackened face, asking, in a hoarse mysterious whisper, the singular question "whether the master wanted such a thing as a tun o' coals:" he would not have had the trouble of explaining, in his own good-tempered manner (which has endeared him to all who know him), that the purchase of a ton of coals is a grave matter, and not usually negotiated with a stranger who knocks at your door at an unseasonable hour: he would not have been tormented with the information that "the cart was jist round the corner," and that they could be put in, within five minutes, for twenty-one and six. He would not have been provoked to shut the door in the intruder's face: to force his foot from the threshold, where he kept it to prevent the shutting of the door: he would not have been compelled to hear such language as "Would eighteen bob break your back?" howled several times through his keyhole; which vulgar idiom has been kindly translated for me by young Mr. Phast, of Somerset-house, into the politer terms of, "Would eighteen shillings be too much payment for you to make, in the present state of your means?"

I rather think the idea of a place where one can repose, after the rude combat of daily life, as well as the idea of strength and security, is meant to be included in the expression, that "an Englishman's house is his castle." It is a mockery to tell me that nobody has a right to attack my home, to break open my door, to bore a hole in my wall, to violate the sanctity of my hearth, while they break my bell-wire, smear my door-step, lift the ponderous iron ring in the mouth of that animal on my door (who seems to grin at me in derision every time I enter), and give such single and double knocks as "throb thunder through my castle floors," all day, and especially in the morning. Any one whose castle happens to be in the suburbs of London, will know that I am no fighter of shadows, no hypochondriacal writer of letters to the newspapers; but a man with a genuine grievance. I am not only attacked incessantly, but subjected to insulting offers from the enemy himself, to victual and furnish me for the siege. It is nothing to me (I say this with all respect to those public-spirited men who have spoken before me) that these grievances have been stated before in public print. So long as the annoyance is allowed to increase and continue in a rampant state, I swear by the waters of Styx (lifting up my right hand), and under the penalty of loss of nectar, and forfeiture of one hundred years of Elysian bliss, not to cease to raise my feeble (though, I trust from the justice of my complaint, strong) voice against it.

If I were practically, instead of theoretically, the lord of a castle, or in any position that would bear a comparison with the lord of a castle, should I endure one of these annoyances for a moment? Or should I not arise from my slumber, and shake them off, as the lion shakes the dew-drops from his mane? Should I not, in the former case, rather cause to be collared the first intruder, and should I not have him brought before me, like a poacher before a landlord? Should I not ask him, in blank verse, or in recitative (like Duke Borgia, at Her Majesty's Theatre), how he dared to insult me in my castle-hall? And waiting (for form's sake) his reply, should I not immediately communicate to the Dutch-clock man (supposing a Dutch-clock man to be the first victim) that his hour was come? Or to the onion man (with a like supposition) that I was about to reciprocate his officious offer of a rope? Should I not, in short, have slung out one, at least, of my invaders — a terrible example to the rest — upon the top-most of my battlements, long ago?

I say, when we boast to the Frenchman that we do not pile our houses one upon another, to the eighth and ninth story, but cut them into thin slices, and spread them over the green fields to such a stretch, that to say that "myself and friends reside in London," does not mean that we are within twelve cabman's miles of each other, when half our days

are wasted in walking from place to place, and all for the sake of the privilege of each of us having a kind of castle to himself, with garden behind, and the water laid on, — I say, when we are constantly flinging in the Frenchman's teeth, oratorical sentences about "domestic peace," "sacred hearth-stone," "children climbing our knees," &c., it is only fair that he should be informed of a few of the drawbacks. Are we to be going on for ever, bragging of not being over-partial to balls or theatres, disliking masquerades, liking plain joints at home and detesting *restaurants*, holding evenings at the *café* in detestation, hating the click of dominoes, liking carpets, and abominating wood fires, and saying not a word about these things? Did I not, conceited J.B.! who kept me awake, from Paris to St. Ouen (you who have thrice appeared to me since, in dreams, in very likeness of Gog or Magog, I don't know which) — did I not listen to you, for six mortal hours, discoursing of England, glory, hearthstones, and the like, to thy moustached neighbour, in French less intelligible to him than to me; till (out of sheer exhaustion) he admitted the social degradation of his native land, and dropped into slumber about twenty minutes before a fresh smell of sea-weed and a stentorian notice to prepare our billets came in at our carriage window; and shall I not introduce him to you beside that hearth, in the centre of that castle, that he may see your weakness, as the

valet spies that of his master, according to a proverb, which cannot be unknown to that long-suffering Gaul? Was it strange (I ask), when I had taken a secret determination to arm him against another such attack from one of my countrymen, with a truer picture of the interior of the Briton's castle, and had followed him closely for that purpose, from the station to the steamboat — was it to be wondered at (I say), seeing my beardless chin, my unmoustached lip, and hearing my cry “hold hard,” to the Frenchman, who was letting go the head-ropes, before I had got aboard — was it at all remarkable that he shrank from me; that suddenly finding my eye fixed upon him, he recoiled; that he resisted my attempt to commence a conversation, with less politeness than I had generally met with from his compatriots; that on three several occasions he adroitly went round the funnel to escape me; and once fled to the fore-castle, preferring its inferior accommodation, for awhile (although he had paid chief-cabin fare); that, when I grew heated with the chase, and determined not to be baffled, I approached him, with the intention of whispering in his ear, “Fear not, I am your friend,” he suddenly disappeared down the companion-ladder; and retired to bed? If this should meet the eye of J. B., he is earnestly requested to answer this chain of questions in the affirmative (if he can), and generally to ponder

upon this article, and the moral that it points.

THE VOICE OF CHEER.

FROM Heaven there comes a voice of cheer,

In sunshine and in shade;
Though of its tones we will not hear,
When most we need their aid.
Did we but listen, we should feel
Our heavy hearts grow light;
And gather strength, in woe or weal,
To tread the path of right.

It whispers o'er the cradled child,
Fast lock'd in peaceful sleep,
Ere its pure soul is sin-beguiled,
Ere sorrow bids it weep.
It soothes the mother's ear with hope,
Like sweet bells' silver chime,
And bodies forth the unknown scope
Of dark mysterious Time.

'T is heard in manhood's risen day,
And nerves the soul to might,
When life shines forth with fullest ray,
Forewarning least of night.
It speaks of noble ends to gain,
A world to mend by love,
That tempers strength of hand and brain
With softness of the dove.

It falls upon the aged ear,
Though deaf to human voice;
And when man's evening closes drear,
It bids him still rejoice.
It tells of bliss beyond the grave,
The parted soul to thrill;
The guerdon of the truly brave
Who fought the powers of ill.

LITTLE RED WORKING-COAT.

LITTLE RED WORKING-COAT, saved from the wolf that fattens in our London alleys, is now regularly set up in business in our London streets.

The story of the little fellow is

extremely interesting when put into statistics, the form for telling stories most popular at present. The good fairy who has been his protector would have been, a thousand years ago, a lovely damsel with a gilt stick, but she appears in the year 1851 under a character more suited to the current taste, as the Ragged School Shoeblack Society. In that form she has already saved from the wolf, not simply one Little Red Working-Coat, but more than sixty; and she is ready and able, happily, to befriend hundreds more.

Be acquainted with the little fellows, if you please, under their names of Shoe-black and Broomer. The shoe-black brushes the mud from our boots, and makes our feet to shine; the broomer cleans the pavement and desires to keep the London streets unsullied, like so many paths of honour. Broomerism is, however, in its infancy, and the poor little broomers, many of them, are not far from the same stage of life; they are babies that have fallen off the mother's lap into a gaol, and have been, some of them, in gaol a dozen times before their milk teeth have been shed. But chance has brought them to the feet of the good fairy; and the children who would struggle to be honest are assisted prudently, and restored to their old scene of corruption, the streets, to invite the custom of a kindly public, each with his red coat and blacking bottle, or his red coat and broom.

Mercuries and brassers are to follow — quite new trades, you see; for Little Red Working-Coat competes with nobody, and elbows nobody out of a living. He starts his own trade as a handy little boy, and trusts that he shall merit patronage from a discerning public.

There are in London more than a hundred Ragged Schools, and the superintendent of each school recommends to the good fairy, or the Ragged School Shoe-black Society, those boys who are most ready and worthy to be trained and employed. Of more than sixty little red coats who have been entrusted with the blacking bottles of office, twelve have retired from the streets into situations, seven have emigrated to Australia, nine have been dismissed for misconduct. Their earnings during the last summer amounted to more than five hundred pounds; being an average for each boy of about two shillings a day. Nearly a hundred pounds of the whole sum was earned in Hyde Park; where each boy might have been fully occupied had he possessed five pots, five sets of brushes, and five pair of red arms. As a consequence of this good patronage, it follows that many of the boys have hived a little honey for the winter. One West-end capitalist has already more than seven pounds sterling invested in the Savings Bank.

The Little Red Working-Coats of London are an organised brigade. They assemble for

prayers every morning, at seven o'clock, in a house not far from Charing-cross; and to the same place they bring their earnings every night. During the day two inspectors are engaged in visiting the several stations at which the little fellows ply their trade, and there is carried out among them the best practicable system of education and discipline. They have a library of pleasant books; they attend school in the evening and every Sunday. They are a self-supporting red republic; and a happy red republic, very much satisfied with the existing order of things. With old experience of a gaol, and new experience of human kindness, their hearts are full enough of the child to warm under the experience of active sympathy, and to look up to the good fairy generally with an earnest gratitude.

The fairy, in the meantime, retains a potent wand — a golden wand — which, in the modern form which it assumes, we have to define as a round surplus of one hundred and sixty pounds.

On Lord Mayor's day, a troop of red republicans attacked the pavement of Regent Street with brooms, and in a short time triumphantly swept away those enemies of shopkeepers and foot-passengers — the dust and mud. The enemy's flags were taken by the broomers. To each broom there were allotted a certain number of shops, and the pavement in front of each was kept clean for the payment of one

penny a day. The benefit of this revolution in the streets became palpable, and its expense was really so slight, that it very soon spread from the Quadrant to the Circus in Oxford Street. The Strand, however, has not yet pronounced; and no attempt has yet been made for the establishment of broomerism in the city. Which we all understand to be the last place to adopt anything good — except to eat, or to drink.

Success, in the meantime, stimulates the authors of the movement to propound fresh inventions, and to widen still farther the means of livelihood for poor boys rescued from the gaol. The public certainly is ready to assist.

To every six broomers there will hereafter be attached a message boy, who will be known by his name of "Mercury" legibly inscribed upon a label. This little republican will be at the call of any shopkeeper within his district, for the purpose of running errands, at the rate of threepence a mile, or sixpence an hour. The Society will aid this movement, by rendering itself responsible for all parcels entrusted to the Mercuries, under the value of five pounds. By promoting to such office only those capitalists who have as much as five pounds in their bank, it will in fact make the boy himself pay for the value of the property, in case of theft.

Then there will arise among us "Brassers," and their offer to the public will be for a penny from each house, to keep door-plates,

shop-plates, knockers, and bell-pulls in a state of tremendous brilliancy.

The Ragged Schools take thousands of boys yearly from the streets; which they pollute, and where they are polluted. The public will cordially rejoice, we know, to find — as the plan goes on, and prospers — that such boys by hundreds are returned upon the streets as useful members of society. The public, we are sure, will benevolently assist in the creation of these little convenient trades, which, while they give us a good pennyworth for our penny, interfere with no man's livelihood, and create honest callings for the children who are struggling to live out of gaol. It is by practical schemes like these that the best fairy-transformations of our own day are effected. Little Red Working-Coat can tell a story quite as interesting to our hearts as any pleasant legend of the nursery.

THE TRUE TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND.

WE all remember Tom Tiddler's Ground, upon which, in our childhood, we used to poach, "picking up gold and silver." At page 265, Vol. V., and at page 373, Vol. IX. of Household Words, it will be found that we have called attention to the wealth derivable from chemical products obtained out of peat. As a source

of wealth, the Irish bogs are almost inexhaustible; and as a source of comment in the pages of Household Words, they are by no means exhausted yet. It is pleasant to feel, as we have of late been feeling, that we have on hand quite a little glut of hopeful Irish subjects; of industrial efforts from within, for the regeneration of the country. There is the Small Proprietors' Society, which has been recently commenced by Irish gentlemen, in a most temperate and able manner, with no reference to party politics, but with the most earnest reference to the well-being of the people. That has a claim upon our space, which we by no means intend to put aside. Then, there is the Irish Amelioration Society, with its works at Derrymullen, county Kildare; and there are also other enterprises for the extraction of gold, in the shape of peat fuel and charcoal, out of Irish bogs. Ireland made really a respectable display of industrial efforts at the late Exhibition; and, the Repeal agitation being defunct, it is pleasant to see that industry and the employment of resources are being now regarded as the true solution of the Irish difficulty. Nature has scattered cheques for very large amounts all over the Irish soil; the bogs are very handsome cheques — but until of late, there have been few to suggest picking them up, and getting them converted into cash.

In that desert corner of the Exhibition, Class I., Mining and

Mineral Products, behind an ornament of Irish peat and potatoes, the solitary wanderer might detect a little pigeon-hole containing cakes. Not macaroons, but cakes of more importance to society; dark little compact cakes, clean and smooth as chocolate, but not so good to eat; they were in fact bog bannocks. They were baked by the Great Peat-working Company of Ireland, after the manner patented by Messrs. Gwynne and Hays. According to this patent, the wet peat, by the application of centrifugal force, is dried almost immediately after it is taken from the bog, and means are applied also for the destruction of its fibrous texture. Heat is then applied, whereby there becomes developed in the peat its tarry constituent; it is then compressed, so that it shall acquire the density of coal; and the whole series of processes comes to an end so rapidly, that from the state of wet peat to the state of hard polished cake, the period of transition is not more than half an hour. These cakes are peat fuel.

Peat fuel is said to produce a heat so equably diffusible, as to beget more steam than coal, when used under a boiler. It is used by steamers plying on the Shannon, and for engines generally in sundry places; where, whatever may be the truth of the assertion that it produces more steam, it is quite certain that the boilers fired by it, last twice as long as those fired in the usual way by coal. To distillers, brewers, soap-boilers,

sugar-refiners, and others, as an advertisement might say, this fuel is highly to be recommended; while to families its cheapness, its prompt ignition, and the ready and agreeable diffusion of heat from it, make it really an advantageous substitute for coal. Let us hint, too, that Irish peat fuel may yet play an important part in the development of steam communication between Ireland and America.

Bog bannocks may be converted into charcoal; or peat, in the first instance, may be manufactured on the bogs into peat charcoal, as is now being done in many places. As an article of commerce, peat charcoal is of much greater importance than peat fuel, and in this form, if in no other, the large cheques lying idle in the shape of Irish peat bogs may very conveniently be cashed. That fact it is just now our design to illustrate.

Iron is made in England with pit coal, in the form of coke. Wood charcoal would be infinitely better, but is much too dear; peat charcoal, for the smelting and manufacture of metals, is equal in every respect to the charcoal got from wood, and can be supplied at a much smaller cost. For the finest kind of iron, it is almost requisite that charcoal, and not coke, be employed in the manufacture, and the use in this way of peat charcoal, is no novelty. At Ichoux, in the department of the Landes, in France; at Wadenhammer, and Wachter-Neun-

hammer, in Germany; at Ransko, in Bohemia; at Königsbrunn, in Bavaria, and elsewhere, peat charcoal is commonly employed. The conversion of Irish bog into peat charcoal, is not unlikely to develop in the sister country mineral resources to an extent not even at this moment anticipated. Formerly, peat was used extensively in manufacturing the iron exported from Ireland into England. In England, wood had been used; our iron-works, as those in Sussex, being located in the middle of our forests; but the exhaustion of our woods led to a demand for Irish metal. The discovery that coke would suit our purpose well enough, checked suddenly the Irish trade, and about a hundred years ago the last charcoal furnace was extinguished in the county Kerry. It is after the lapse of a hundred years in this very county Kerry, that the charcoal-making is resumed by the Peat-working Company.

Ireland still contains some of the richest iron ores in Europe, and copper is found in considerable quantities in Wicklow, Waterford, and the northern part of Cork. The lead and silver of county Clare and the Wicklow gold mines, have long had a fabulous reputation; and it is well known that in several parts of Ireland valuable mineral products have turned up under the superintendence of new proprietors of estates, formerly neglected by embarrassed men. To work the mineral resources of the country,

three millions of acres of the best kind of fuel are provided.

Our continental friends lately exhibited among us many specimens of charcoal-iron in the form of guns and muskets; the Government factory of Wurtemberg, among others, Dandoy and Co., of Mauberge, in France, and some of the smaller German States. The Belgian Government exhibited, through the director of the Royal Cannon Foundry, some iron guns by which our Committee on Ordnance might be edified. An English iron gun, after three hundred rounds, requires reventing, and with reventing, the entire machine will last through not more than a thousand rounds. The Belgians, however, let us look at a revented gun, out of which there had been fired six thousand rounds, and at another gun which had not yet needed reventing, and the vent of which was still but little altered, although they had fired it two thousand one hundred and eighteen times.

Three tons of coke make one ton of pig-iron, thirty hundred-weight of charcoal make a ton of the finest charcoal-iron. Ironmasters working for our Ordnance use pit-coal, though it is well known that charcoal will produce three times the amount of carbonisation, and, therefore, of elasticity and tenacity, the properties required for the securing of a good metallic result. When Belgium separated from Holland, in 1830, General Paixhans, of the French Artillery, was sent to

assist the Belgians in the siege of Antwerp. In company with General Busen, he reconnoitred the citadel, and found it to be a place of extraordinary strength. Every point was well sheltered from the effects of shells, and there was, moreover, a big ditch which could be filled with water from the sea. The French general proposed then to King Leopold to shorten the siege by means of a mortar, of which the shells would weigh a thousand pounds, and contain each a hundred pounds of powder. This, it was thought, would with a few blows decide the struggle, and cut short the pains and miseries of a protracted siege. The proposal was believed to be inhuman, and it was not until after fifty thousand cannon balls and shells had been spent in vain upon the city, that the monster mortar — a charcoal casting made at Liege — was brought out. Nine shells were fired, huge flying mines, one of which burst in the air, and eight descended in the citadel. Two days after the first shell was fired the Dutch surrendered.

A mortar capable of propelling with any certainty a shell of such dimensions, or capable, indeed, of being fired with any safety to its owners, must have been manufactured with the utmost nicety. Charcoal of wood or peat must necessarily have been used in the manufacture, not only because by that means a tougher and more elastic metal is obtained, but because, from the absence of

sulphur in charcoal, flaws in the metal are avoided. From the use of pit-coal iron, which creates a risk of flaws, lamentable accidents have sometimes resulted. Without the finer descriptions of steel and iron which we import from the north of Europe and the South of Asia, from the neighbourhoods of the Pole and the Equator, Sheffield cutlery would not so well sustain its reputation. French, Prussians, and Bavarians, employ peat charcoal: and peat charcoal is offered to us now by A, B, C, and D, by sundry workers who already have begun to settle on the bogs of Ireland.

Peat-charcoal, which we thus find to be an article of no small prospective value to our manufactures, is, perhaps, still more valuable, certainly more universally to be appreciated, when employed as an agent for the promotion of the public health, and we shall have also to speak of it as a manure.

We have mentioned Mr. Gwynne's patent for the manufacture of peat fuel; we will pause here to interpolate a brief notice of the different kind of operation for the manufacture of peat-charcoal, as it may now be seen about twenty miles from Dublin, on the Bog of Allen, where the Irish Amelioration Society have established works. First, as to the cutting of the bog; the outfall of the drainage having been found, trenches are cut, four feet wide and deep, parallel to each other. The sides of these trenches, as

they deepen, are cut into steps or terraces, so that you go down stairs from each side, as it were, into each; this is to prevent the sides from falling in. When the soil below the bog is reached, the remnants of stair between the trenches are also removed, and the cleared soil is handed over to the farmer. The superincumbent bog has been removed — the cheque has been picked up, and cashed — and the virgin soil on which it lay, as a witty writer has expressed it, being tickled with the plough, laughs with a harvest.

The process of cashing the cheque takes place as follows. The wet blocks are piled on wicker trays, dried partly by exposure to the air, and then carried on peculiar little waggons to the furnace. There they are stacked against an air-chamber, and completely dried. The mass, being finally ignited, chars in a few hours, and the resulting charcoal can be either used as fuel, or granulated like coarse gunpowder for sanitary or agricultural purposes. By Mr. Rogers's compressing machine, it can be made denser than wood charcoal, and sold at one-fourth of the cost. The processes are more fully described in a small pamphlet by Mr. Yarrow.

A year or two ago, Prince Albert suggested to the Royal Agricultural Society, in a paper on the treatment of sewage manure, that use should be made of upward filtration, through some

absorbing medium, having also a deodorising power. At the head of his list of such substances was charcoal. Charcoal deodorises not by the destruction or change, but the absorption and the retention in its substance of the gases which annoy the nose and undermine the health, although able to make for us flesh and bone, if we can compel them to lie among the clods, and be the servants of our farmers. Sewage matter filtered through peat-charcoal, which is itself an excellent manure, leaves in the charcoal all its fertilising principles, and forms an inodorous solid substance, fit to be carried off in sacks, annoying nobody; a manure infinitely cheaper, and decidedly better than guano, and placed to the credit of our English harvests. Mr. Yarrow has received from the town of Weston-super-Mare the premium for his plan of draining that town precisely on Prince Albert's principle. We have the authority of the chairman of the Dublin Board of Health in stating, that a large and most offensive cess-pool, in a central part of Dublin, has been emptied with the use of peat-charcoal, and its contents carted off in broad day, without the slightest suggestion to the eyes and noses in the neighbourhood of the nature of the operation that was going on. London air is being poisoned, and London soil is being saturated with putrescent matter. The curse would be transformed into a blessing by the free employment

of peat-charcoal, and a large profit could be made out of the cleansing. Furthermore, in hospitals, in alleys, in filthy cellars, peat-charcoal thrown about absorbs the gases that are in the air. It does not decompose these, and substitute a coughing mixture, like chloride of lime; it simply absorbs and fixes them unaltered in its substance, wherein they can be carried off in a bag to fertilise our fields and gardens.

When granulated for sanitary purposes, according to Mr. Rogers's patent process, peat-charcoal will digest and hold, deodorised, a quantity of offensive matter equal to itself in weight, without allowing the loss of volatile gases, or any element that gives it a commercial value. Peat-charcoal would convert the London drains into a comfortable mine of wealth. "If it were possible," says Liebig, "to husband all the filth of London, it would form the most valuable manure in the world." Well, we can husband it, and store it in a form which retains no trace of its origin, and is by no means filthy. This may be seen at Stanley Bridge, Fulham, where sewerage, in full possession of all its filthy characteristics, enters a tank containing peat-charcoal, and leaves the tank in a clear stream, without taste or smell.

Charcoal itself, we should remember, is the staff of vegetable life; used alone, as a manure, it renders the soil light and friable, and ever-absorbent, sucks in

abundantly the gases which plants require; other manures impoverish by keeping, charcoal is always adding to its wealth; what others are too ready to give out, charcoal is always eager to take in.

Not only in the cellars and the filthy haunts of our neglected neighbours, but in stables, piggeries, and places of that kind, charcoal upon the floor would keep the animals in health, and save the loss of volatile manure. In the pantry a tray of peat-charcoal preserves the meat; taken from thence, when it requires renewing, it may be thrown over a stable-floor, into a privy, or sprinkled about a drain, to purify the atmosphere, and become in itself richer as a manure. Strewn over potatoes, when pitted, it has been found to prevent disease.

These are some of the uses of peat-charcoal, which we could illustrate abundantly, if that were needful. The manufacture of this charcoal is commencing now upon some portions of the Irish bogs; and the product of the manufacture is supplied already at a very cheap rate. As the value of the bog-products becomes more generally known, the stimulus to enterprise in Ireland will increase, and Nature's cheques will be converted into gold at last, and happily applied to the maintenance and clothing of a hungry family.

A CHILD'S HISTORY OF
ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XII.

AT two-and-thirty years of age, JOHN became King of England. His pretty little nephew ARTHUR had the best claim to the throne; but John seized the treasure, and made fine promises to the nobility, and got himself crowned at Westminster within a few weeks after his brother Richard's death. I doubt whether the crown could possibly have been put upon the head of a meaner coward, or a more detestable villain, if the country had been searched from end to end to find him out.

The French King, Philip, refused to acknowledge the right of John to his new dignity, and declared in favour of Arthur. You must not suppose that he had any generosity of feeling for the fatherless boy; it merely suited his ambitious schemes to oppose the King of England. So, John and the French King went to war about Arthur.

He was a handsome boy, at that time only twelve years old. He was not born when his father, Geoffrey, had his brains trampled out at the tournament; and, beside the misfortune of never having known a father's guidance and protection, he had the additional misfortune to have a foolish mother (CONSTANCE by name), lately married to her third husband. She took Arthur, upon John's accession, to the French King, who pretended to be very

much his friend, and made him a Knight, and promised him his daughter in marriage; but, who cared so little about him in reality, that finding it his interest to make peace with King John for a time, he did so without the least consideration for the poor little Prince, and heartlessly sacrificed all his interests.

Young Arthur, for two years afterwards, lived quietly; and in the course of that time his mother died. But, the French King then finding it his interest to quarrel with King John again, again made Arthur his pretence, and invited the orphan boy to court. "You know your rights, Prince," said the French King, "and you would like to be a King. Is it not so?" "Truly," said Prince Arthur, "I should greatly like to be a King!" "Then," said Philip, "you shall have two hundred gentlemen who are Knights of mine, and with them you shall go to win back the provinces belonging to you, of which your uncle, the usurping King of England, has taken possession. I myself, meanwhile, will head a force against him in Normandy." Poor Arthur was so flattered and so grateful, that he signed a treaty with the crafty French King, agreeing to consider him his superior Lord, and that the French King should keep for himself whatever he could take from King John.

Now, King John was so bad in all ways, and King Philip was so perfidious, that Arthur, between the two, might as well have been

a lamb between a fox and a wolf. But, being so young, he was ardent and flushed with hope; and, when the people of Brittany (which was his inheritance) sent him five hundred more knights and five thousand foot soldiers, he believed his fortune was made. The people of Brittany had been fond of him from his birth, and had requested that he might be called Arthur, in remembrance of that dimly-famous English Arthur, of whom I told you early in this book, whom they believed to have been the brave friend and companion of an old King of their own. They had tales among them about a prophet called MERLIN (of the same old time), who had foretold that their own King should be restored to them after hundreds of years; and they believed that the prophecy would be fulfilled in Arthur; that the time would come when he would rule them with a crown of Brittany upon his head; and when neither King of France nor King of England would have any power over them. When Arthur found himself riding in a glittering suit of armour on a richly caparisoned horse, at the head of his train of knights and soldiers, he began to believe this too, and to consider old Merlin a very superior prophet.

He did not know — how could he, being so innocent and inexperienced? — that his little army was a mere nothing against the power of the King of England. The French King knew it; but the poor boy's fate was little to

him, so that the King of England was worried and distressed. Therefore, King Philip went his way into Normandy, and Prince Arthur went his way towards Mirebeau, a French town near Poitiers, both very well pleased.

Prince Arthur went to attack the town of Mirebeau, because his grandmother Eleanor, who has so often made her appearance in this history (and who had always been his mother's enemy), was living there, and because his Knights said, "Prince, if you can take her prisoner, you will be able to bring the King your uncle to terms!" But she was not to be easily taken. She was old enough by this time — eighty — but she was as full of stratagem as she was full of years and wickedness. Receiving intelligence of young Arthur's approach, she shut herself up in a high tower, and encouraged her soldiers to defend it like men. Prince Arthur with his little army besieged the high tower. King John, hearing how matters stood, came up to the rescue, with his army. So here was a strange family-party! The boy-Prince besieging his grandmother, and his uncle besieging him!

This position of affairs did not last long. One summer night King John, by treachery, got his men into the town, surprised Prince Arthur's force, took two hundred of his knights, and seized the Prince himself in his bed. The knights were put in heavy irons, and driven away in open carts

drawn by bullocks, to various dungeons where they were most inhumanly treated, and where some of them were starved to death. Prince Arthur was sent to the castle of Falaise.

One day, while he was in prison at that castle, mournfully thinking it strange that one so young should be in so much trouble, and looking out of the small window in the deep dark wall, at the summer sky and the birds, the door was softly opened, and he saw his uncle the King standing in the shadow of the archway, looking very grim.

"Arthur," said the King, with his wicked eyes more on the stone floor than on his nephew, "will you not trust to the gentleness, the friendship, and the truthfulness, of your loving uncle?"

"I will tell my loving uncle that," replied the boy, "when he does me right. Let him restore to me my kingdom of England, and then come to me and ask the question."

The King looked at him and went out. "Keep that boy close prisoner," said he to the warden of the castle.

Then the King took secret counsel with the worst of his nobles how the Prince was to be got rid of. Some said, "Put out his eyes and keep him in prison, as Robert of Normandy was kept." Others said, "Have him stabbed." Others, "Have him hanged." Others, "Have him poisoned."

King John, feeling that in any case, whatever was done afterwards, it would be a satisfaction

to his mind to have those handsome eyes burnt out that had looked at him so proudly while his own royal eyes were blinking at the stone floor, sent certain ruffians to Falaise to blind the boy with red-hot irons. But Arthur so pathetically entreated them, and shed such piteous tears, and so appealed to HUBERT DE BOURG the warden of the castle, who had a love for him, and was an honourable tender man, that Hubert could not bear it. To his eternal honour he prevented the torture from being performed, and, at his own risk, sent the savages away.

The chafed and disappointed King bethought himself of the stabbing suggestion next, and, with his shuffling manner and his cruel face, proposed it to one William de Bray. "I am a gentleman and not an executioner," said William de Bray, and left the presence with disdain.

But it was not difficult for a King to hire a murderer in those days. King John found one for his money, and sent him down to the castle of Falaise. "On what errand dost thou come?" said Hubert to this fellow. "To despatch young Arthur," he returned. "Go back to him who sent thee," answered Hubert, "and say that I will do it!"

King John very well knowing that Hubert would never do it, but that he courageously sent this reply to save the Prince or gain time, despatched messengers to

convey the young prisoner to the castle of Rouen.

Arthur was soon forced from the good Hubert — of whom he had never stood in greater need than then — carried away by night, and lodged in his new prison: where, through his grated window, he could hear the deep waters of the river Seine, rippling against the stone wall below.

One dark night, as he lay sleeping, dreaming perhaps of rescue by those unfortunate gentlemen who were obscurely suffering and dying in his cause, he was roused, and bidden by his jailer to come down the staircase to the foot of the tower. He hurriedly dressed himself and obeyed. When they came to the bottom of the winding stairs, and the night air from the river blew upon their faces, the jailer trod upon his torch and put it out. Then, Arthur, in the darkness, was hurriedly drawn into a solitary boat. And in that boat, he found his uncle and one other man.

He knelt to them, and prayed them not to murder him. Deaf to his entreaties, they stabbed him and sunk his body in the river with heavy stones. When the spring-morning broke, the tower-door was closed, the boat was gone, the river sparkled on its way, and never more was any trace of the poor boy beheld by mortal eyes.

The news of this atrocious murder being spread in England, awakened a hatred of the King (already odious for his many vices,

and for his having stolen away and married a noble lady while his own wife was living) that never slept again through his whole reign. In Brittany, the indignation was intense. Arthur's own sister ELEANOR was in the power of John and shut up in a convent at Bristol, but his half-sister ALICE was in Brittany. The people chose her, and the murdered prince's father-in-law, the last husband of Constance, to represent them; and carried their fiery complaints to King Philip. King Philip summoned King John (as the holder of territory in France) to come before him and defend himself. King John refusing to appear, King Philip declared him false, perjured, and guilty; and again made war. In a little time, by conquering the greater part of his French territory, King Philip deprived him of one-third of his dominions. And, through all the fighting that took place, King John was always found, either to be eating and drinking, like a gluttonous fool, when the danger was at a distance, or to be running away, like a beaten cur, when it was near.

You might suppose that when he was losing his dominions at this rate, and when his own Nobles cared so little for him or his cause that they plainly refused to follow his banner out of England, he had enemies enough. But he made another enemy of the Pope, which he did in this way.

The Archbishop of Canterbury dying, and the junior monks of

that place wishing to get the start of the senior monks in the appointment of his successor, met together at midnight, secretly elected a certain REGINALD, and sent him off to Rome to get the Pope's approval. The senior monks and the King soon finding this out, and being very angry about it, the junior monks gave way, and all the monks together elected the Bishop of Norwich, who was the King's favourite. The Pope, hearing the whole story, declared that neither election would do for him, and that *he* elected STEPHEN LANGTON. The monks submitting to the Pope, the King turned them all out bodily, and banished them as traitors. The Pope sent three bishops to the King, to threaten him with an Interdict. The King told the bishops that if any Interdict were laid upon his kingdom, he would tear out the eyes and cut off the noses of all the monks he could lay hold of, and send them over to Rome in that undecorated state as a present for their master. The bishops, nevertheless, soon published the Interdict, and fled.

After it had lasted a year, the Pope proceeded to his next step; which was Excommunication. King John was declared excommunicated, with all the usual ceremonies. The King was so incensed at this, and was made so desperate by the disaffection of his Barons and the hatred of his people, that it is said that he even privately sent ambassadors to the Turks in Spain, offering to renounce his religion and hold his

kingdom of them if they would help him. It is related that the ambassadors were admitted to the presence of the Turkish Emir, through long lines of Moorish guards, and that they found the Emir with his eyes seriously fixed on the pages of a large book from which he never once looked up. That they gave him a letter from the King containing his proposals, and were gravely dismissed. That presently the Emir sent for one of them, and conjured him, by his faith in his religion, to say what kind of man the King of England truly was? That the ambassador, thus pressed, replied that the King of England was a false tyrant, against whom his own subjects would soon rise. And that this was quite enough for the Emir.

Money being, in his position, the next best thing to men, King John spared no means of getting it. He set on foot another oppressing and torturing of the unhappy Jews (which was quite in his way), and invented a new punishment for one wealthy Jew of Bristol. Until such time as that Jew should produce a certain large sum of money, the King sentenced him to be imprisoned, and, every day, to have one tooth violently wrenched out of his head — beginning with the double teeth. For seven days, the oppressed man bore the daily pain and lost the daily tooth; but, on the eighth, he paid the money. With the treasure raised in such ways, the King made an expedition into Ireland, where some

English nobles had revolted. It was one of the very few places from which he did not run away; because no resistance was shown. He made another expedition into Wales — whence he *did* run away in the end: but not before he had got from the Welsh people, as hostages, twenty-seven young men of the best families; every one of whom he caused to be slain in the following year.

To Interdict and Excommunication, the Pope now added his last sentence; Deposition. He proclaimed John no longer King, absolved all his subjects from their allegiance, and sent Stephen Langton and others to the King of France to tell him that, if he would invade England, he should be forgiven all his sins — at least, should be forgiven them by the Pope, if that would do.

As there was nothing that King Philip desired more than to invade England, he collected a great army at Rouen, and a fleet of seventeen hundred ships to bring them over. But the English people, however bitterly they hated the King, were not a people to suffer invasion quietly. They flocked to Dover, where the English standard was, in such great numbers to enrol themselves as defenders of their native land, that there were not provisions for them, and the King could only select and retain sixty thousand. But, at this crisis, the Pope, who had his own reasons for objecting to either King John or King Philip being too powerful, interfered.

He entrusted a legate, whose name was PANDOLF, with the easy task of frightening King John. He sent him to the English Camp, from France, to terrify him with exaggerations of King Philip's power, and his own weakness in the discontent of the English Barons and people. Pandolf discharged his commission so well, that King John, in a wretched panic, consented to acknowledge Stephen Langton; to resign his kingdom "to God, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul" — which meant the Pope; and to hold it, ever afterwards, by the Pope's leave, on payment of an annual sum of money. To this shameful contract he publicly bound himself in the church of the Knights Templars at Dover: where he laid at the legate's feet a part of the tribute, which the legate haughtily trampled upon. But they *do* say, that this was merely a genteel flourish, and that he was afterwards seen to pick it up and pocket it.

There was an unfortunate prophet, of the name of Peter, who had greatly increased King John's terrors by predicting that he would be unknighthed (which the King supposed to signify that he would die) before the Feast of Ascension should be past. That was the day after this humiliation. When the next morning came, and the King, who had been trembling all night, found himself alive and safe, he ordered the prophet — and his son too — to be dragged through the streets at

the tails of horses, and then hanged, for having frightened him.

As King John had now submitted, the Pope, to King Philip's great astonishment, took him under his protection, and informed King Philip that he found he could not give him leave to invade England. The angry Philip resolved to do it without his leave; but, he gained nothing and lost much; for, the English, commanded by the Earl of Salisbury, went over, in five hundred ships, to the French coast, before the French fleet had sailed away from it, and utterly defeated the whole.

The Pope then took off his three sentences, one after another, and empowered Stephen Langton publicly to receive King John into the favour of the church again, and to ask him to dinner. The King, who hated Langton with all his might and main — and with reason too, for he was a great and a good man, with whom such a King could have no sympathy — pretended to cry and to be very grateful. There was a little difficulty about settling how much the King should pay, as a recompense to the clergy for the losses he had caused them; but, the end of it was, that the superior clergy got a good deal, and the inferior clergy got little or nothing — which has also happened since King John's time, I believe.

When all these matters were arranged, the King in his triumph became more fierce, and false, and insolent to all around him

than he had ever been. An alliance of sovereigns against King Philip, gave him an opportunity of landing an army in France; with which he even took a town! But, on the French King's gaining a great victory, he ran away, of course, and made a truce for five years.

And now the time approached when he was to be still further humbled, and made to feel, if he could feel anything, what wretched creature he was. Of all men in the world, Stephen Langton seemed raised up by Heaven to oppose and subdue him. When he ruthlessly burnt and destroyed the property of his own subjects, because their Lords, the Barons, would not serve him abroad, Stephen Langton fearlessly re-proved and threatened him. When he swore to restore the laws of King Edward, or the laws of King Henry the First, Stephen Langton knew his falsehood, and pursued him through all his evasions. When the Barons met at the abbey of Saint Edmund's-Bury, to consider their wrongs and the King's oppressions, Stephen Langton roused them by his fervid words to demand a solemn charter of rights and liberties from their perjured master, and to swear, one by one, on the High Altar, that they would have it, or would wage war against him to the death. When the King hid himself in London from the Barons, and was at last obliged to receive them, they told him roundly they would not believe him unless Stephen

Langton became a surety that he would keep his word. When he took the Cross, to invest himself with some interest, and belong to something that was received with favour, Stephen Langton was still immoveable. When he appealed to the Pope, and the Pope wrote to Stephen Langton in behalf of his new favourite, Stephen Langton was deaf, even to the Pope himself, and saw before him nothing but the welfare of England and the crimes of the English King.

At Easter time, the Barons assembled at Stamford in Lincolnshire, in proud array, and, marching near to Oxford where the King was, delivered into the hands of Stephen Langton and two others, a list of grievances. "And these," they said, "he must redress, or we will do it for ourselves!" When Stephen Langton told the King as much, and read the list to him, he went half mad with rage. But that did him no more good than his afterwards trying to pacify the Barons with lies. They called themselves and their followers, "The army of God and the Holy Church." Marching through the country, with the people thronging to them everywhere (except at Northampton, where they failed in an attack upon the castle), they at last triumphantly set up their banner in London itself, whither the whole land, tired of the tyrant, seemed to flock to join them. Seven knights alone, of all the knights in England, remained

with the King; who, reduced to this strait, at last sent the Earl of Pembroke to the Barons to say that he approved of everything, and would meet them to sign their charter when they would. "Then," said the Barons, "let the day be the 15th of June, and the place, Runny-Mead."

On Monday, the fifteenth of June, one thousand two hundred and fourteen, the King came from Windsor Castle, and the Barons came from the town of Staines, and they met on Runny-Mead, which is still a pleasant meadow by the Thames, where rushes grow in the clear waters of the winding river, and its banks are green with grass and trees. On the side of the Barons, came the General of their army, ROBERT FITZ-WALTER, and a great concourse of the nobility of England. With the King, came, in all, some four-and-twenty persons of any note, most of whom despised him and were merely his advisers in form. On that great day, and in that great company, the King signed MAGNA CHARTA — the great charter of England — by which he pledged himself to maintain the church in its rights; to relieve the Barons of oppressive obligations as vassals of the Crown — of which the Barons, in their turn, pledged themselves to relieve *their* vassals, the people; to respect the liberties of London and all other cities and boroughs; to protect foreign merchants who came to England; to imprison no man without a fair trial; and to

sell, delay, or deny justice to none. As the Barons knew his falsehood well, they further required, as their securities, that he should send out of his kingdom all his foreign troops; that for two months they should hold possession of the city of London, and Stephen Langton of the Tower; and that five-and-twenty of their body, chosen by themselves, should be a lawful committee to watch the keeping of the charter, and to make war upon him if he broke it.

All this he was obliged to yield. He signed the charter with a smile, and, if he could have looked agreeable, would have done so, as he departed from the splendid assembly. When he got home to Windsor Castle, he was quite a madman in his helpless fury. And he broke the charter immediately afterwards.

He sent abroad for foreign soldiers, and sent to the Pope for help, and plotted to take London by surprise, while the Barons should be holding a great tournament at Stamford, which they had agreed to hold there as a celebration of the charter. The Barons, however, found him out and put it off. Then, when the Barons desired to see him and tax him with his treachery, he made numbers of appointments with them, and kept none, and shifted from place to place, and was constantly sneaking and skulking about. At last he appeared at Dover, to join his foreign soldiers of whom numbers came into his

pay; and with them he besieged and took Rochester Castle, which was occupied by knights and soldiers of the Barons. He would have hanged them every one; but the leader of the foreign soldiers, fearful of what the English people might afterwards do to him, interfered to save the knights; therefore the King was fain to satisfy his vengeance with the death of all the common men. Then, he sent the Earl of Salisbury, with one portion of his army, to ravage the eastern part of his own dominions, while he carried fire and slaughter into the northern part; torturing, plundering, killing, and inflicting every possible cruelty upon the people; and, every morning, setting a worthy example to his men by setting fire, with his own monster-hands, to the house where he had slept last night. Nor was this all; for, the Pope, coming to the aid of his precious friend, laid the kingdom under an Interdict again, because the people took part with the Barons. It did not much matter, for the people had grown so used to it now, that they had begun to think about it. It occurred to them—perhaps to Stephen Langton too—that they could keep their churches open, and ring their bells, without the Pope's permission as well as with it. So, they tried the experiment—and found that it succeeded perfectly.

It being now impossible to bear the country, as a wilderness of cruelty, or longer to hold any terms with such a forsworn out-

law of a King, the Barons sent to LOUIS, son of the French monarch, to offer him the English crown. Caring as little for the Pope's excommunication of him if he accepted the offer, as it is possible his father may have cared for the Pope's forgiveness of his sins, he landed at Sandwich (King John immediately running away from Dover, where he happened to be) and went on to London. The Scottish King, with whom many of the Northern English Lords had taken refuge; numbers of the foreign soldiers, numbers of the Barons, and numbers of the people; went over to him every day—King John, the while, continually running away in all directions. The career of Louis was checked, however, by the suspicions of the Barons, founded on the dying declaration of a French Lord, that when the kingdom was conquered he was sworn to banish them as traitors, and to give their estates to some of his own Nobles. Rather than suffer this, some of the Barons hesitated: others even went over to King John.

It seemed to be the turning point of King John's fortunes, for, in his savage and murderous course, he had now taken some towns and met with some successes. But happily for England and humanity, his death was near. Crossing a dangerous quicksand, called the Wash, not very far from Wisbeach, the tide came up and nearly drowned his army. He and his soldiers escaped; but,

looking back from the shore when he was safe, he saw the roaring water sweep down in a torrent, overturn the waggons, horses, and men, that carried his treasure, and engulf them in a raging whirlpool from which nothing could be delivered.

Cursing, and swearing, and gnawing his fingers, he went on to Swinestead Abbey, where the monks set before him quantities of pears, and peaches, and new cider—some say poison too, but there is very little reason to suppose so—of which he ate and drunk in an immoderate and beastly way. All night, he lay ill of a burning fever, and haunted with horrible fears. Next day, they put him in a horse-litter, and carried him to Sleaford Castle, where he passed another night of pain and horror. Next day, they carried him, with greater difficulty than on the day before, to the castle of Newark-upon-Trent; and there, on the eighteenth of October, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the seventeenth of his vile reign, was an end of this miserable brute.

PEARLS FROM THE EAST.

Who knows anything of Hindû mythology, or who, indeed, does not shudder at its very name? People will answer you, if you talk of Jupiter; they will blandly wonder if you speak of Zeus; but, breathe the faintest suspicion of Brahma and Vishnû, and they will

vote you a bore and a pedant, fit only for the dusty shelves of the British Museum. Beyond a confused notion of gods all legs and arms, like huge-bodied centipedes, no one in general society, certainly, no one in *good* society, knows anything of the matter. People have a vague idea that the Hindû Pantheon contains a few millions of deities, all with more than their due proportion of limbs, and some with less than their due proportion of humanity; that monkeys and monsters are the chief curiosities of the adytum; that no rational exposition of all these nightmare fancies can, by any possibility, be given. Nevertheless, if we would take the trouble of learning them, we would find various tales spread through the divine books of Hindûsthan, which are perfect gems of poetry and beauty.

The Greek religion had all the accessories of a perfected art, and of a language which was the classical or court language in every country of the then known world, as was the Norman-French in after times; but, who studies the Vedas in the original tongue, or moulds his plaster of Paris into likenesses of the Hindû Triad? Who cares to master a literature, the very alphabet of which is a juggler's mystery, more like, to uninitiated eyes, the scrawling traces of multitudinous spiders, than the rational strokes of human penmanship? Fewer still care to penetrate into the secret recesses of a temple, which sets up an elephant-

headed aldermanic-looking deity, (Ganesa, God of Wisdom, and Hindû Janus,) with, perhaps, a monkey god by his side as the porter. Which gives you, farther in, a woman creature, (Bhavani, a form of the female Siva,) astride on a black bull, with a necklace of human heads, a sacrificial knife, half-a-dozen arms, and various other unladylike accompaniments, as the Lady of the House. Which makes nothing of a four-headed master (Brahma), and talks lightly of a bright blue complexion — Siva or Mahadevi being sometimes of a blue colour. A pretty legend is given for this translation of Vishnû's proper hue. Vishnû is also blue by right of elemental identity. He is air. Which, the deeper you penetrate, offers you only a confused phantasmagoria of divinities, whom no one can make anything of, every one being somebody else besides himself, and all being each other — not one of the whole crew having the honest individual integrity of the Greek and Latin Sons of Saturn. Which finally leads you into a small dark cell, filled only with a Name — a Name which must be meditated on in silence and secrecy — and which is the greatest mystery of all. This sounds very uninviting; but this is what Hindû mythology is to the superficial observer. Pierce the husk, and you have your reward. The prospect clears before you. The horrible forms are mere physical enigmas answered; the confused phantasmagoria

divides itself into matter-of-fact phenomena, plain and evident; the mystic Name comes home to your own heart with awe; and you acknowledge in the dark, silent cell, that, in the believer, be he Brahmin, or be he Jew,—be he the worshipper of Allah, or the caller upon Ormuzd,—the same thought is to be recognised, the same aspiration, the same cry from the wide human heart.

The Hindû mythology has some exquisite passages, to the full as lovely as the loveliest of the Greek. If Aphrodite rose from the dark blue wave, the lotos-marked Rhemba (Rhemba is the Hindû Aphrodite, or Venus, and also the Pandora,) came blushing forth from the sea of milk which Vishnû churned. If the Hellenic nymphs of land and wood, hill, vale and water, were beautiful, the Apsaras are more beautiful still. They are ten million nymphs; who fill the office of the Mohammedan houris; who were created as attendants on Rhemba, and who disport themselves in heaven, and dance round their graceful mistress. Although Cupid is acknowledged god of all, the mischievous Cama with his flower-tipped shafts might dispute his supremacy. Cama is the Hindû God of Love; he bears five arrows tipped with flowers, and has a banner marked with a fish.

Of Brahma there is not much to say. He, though the first of the great Triad, has neither peculiar temples nor private rites, but is included in the worship paid to

Vishnû and Siva. As the source of all created nature, the "greatest of the great gods and of the lesser ones," he is necessarily interwoven in the honours granted to the minor persons of the Trinity; for, without him, these were nothing. Brahma, be it observed, is different to Brahm. The last is the ineffable mystery, the spirit of the universe, the mystic name of the secret cell, the unpronounceable O'm. Brahma, on the contrary, is an impersonation, the creator of matter (himself the form of matter), but existing, though unborn and uncreated, at the morning of time, when the lotos sprang from Vishnû's body, and bore him, the five-faced red-hued God, in its cup. Thus, Brahma had a beginning, while Brahm is the spirit, without beginning and without ending: the ONE eternal, uncreated, and all-pervading.

We said that Brahma was five-faced. So he was when he was first called into existence; but he afterwards lost one of the capitals to his corporeal column, and went about the world in all the lamentable poverty of only four heads. We will give the two different legends which account for this pauperising deficiency.

Mahadeva or Siva (Time) was the first of the gods, though he is the last of the Triad. On his bosom lay Vishnû, the Preserver, asleep for many ages. (In some legends Vishnû lies under the canopy of the thousand-headed snake, Sysha the endless.) A lotos sprang from the body of the slumbering divi-

nity; and, as its flower reached the flood which then covered the universe, Brahma rose up from its leaves. How, no one can tell. Gods jumping out of lilies are not as easy to be understood as the multiplication table or the rule of three; but Coleridge's "Reason" accounts for all. Looking around, and seeing only a vast solitude, Brahma naturally concluded that he was the first of all things; entitled to precedence, honours, and superiority; the supreme monarch of the whole; perpetual eldest son of the universe. Yet, disturbed at the silence and mystery, he glided down the lotos stalk, like any other hero in search of adventures — a prototype of our old friend John, after his bean-stalk had grown up. He found Vishnû still asleep, and in nowise disturbed by the floral germination of his person. He awoke the god roughly and uncourteously, and asked him "who he was," in tones which savoured more of cudgels than of courts. Vishnû replied that he was the first-born of the gods, and begged his visitor to be seated. Brahma's indignation knew no bounds. He passionately denied the gentle god's title, insulted him amain, and prepared to assert his own rights by the strongest argument of the Ring. Vishnû, though so mild and sweet-natured, could not stave off the quarrel. *Pedibus manibusque*, the gods went to work. And what would have been the result to gods, men, and mice, no one knows, had not Mahadevi stepped in and separated them. "The blue-throated god" soon set the matter at rest. He called them both to his knee, like naughty children for chastisement; he read them a homily on their passions; and he said that whoever would reach to the soles of his feet or the crown of his head, should be esteemed sovereign, and lord of all the universe existing. He then sent them off on their pathless journey. After wandering endless miles and endless years, they both returned foot-sore and weary. When questioned as to their success, Brahma boasted and swaggered a great deal. Oh, yes! he had seen the crown of Mahadevi's head; of course he had; and, if his word were not sufficient, here was the first-born cow, who would bear witness for him. The first-born cow opened her mouth and bowed a gentle assent. Thou vaccine maternity, shame on thy lying lips! Vishnû, ever good and true, confessed that he had not seen the soles of Mahadevi's feet; he was very sorry; he had been patient and diligent, but he had not been able to find them. In great wrath, Mahadevi then cursed Brahma, saying, he should have neither temples nor peculiar rites; he cut off his fifth head, and cursed the mouth of his four-footed witness — which is the true and indubitable reason why the cow, to this day, "chews the cud," and keeps her mouth in a perpetual state of defilement. He then explained that, being Immensity and Infinity, he

could not be compassed by God or man, and therefore Brahma had told an unmistakeable fib. "Vishnû," he said, "was the first-born of the gods and the superior. But he would not undo the decrees of fate. In spite of all, Brahma, mulcted of a head, took his place as superior of the Triad, though, to the present time, no temple is raised to him, and no rite performed to his honour. Mahadevi's curse is still on the consciences of men.

This is one story; the other, is a love episode. Originally Brahma was born with the ordinary number of heads, and no more. Being neither an Irish twin, nor a monster at a fair, he had but one occiput, one pair of eyes, one nose, one mouth, and so on. And we have every reason to believe that he was contented with his facial enumeration. However he fell in love, one day, with Satarupa, who was a beautiful woman, born, like mother Eve, from Brahma's own body. She, to avoid his love, stepped on one side; but Brahma, unable to stir after the polype-like division of himself which had just taken place, caused another head to start up from his neck, so that he might still look on the thing he loved. This miracle was repeated four times in succession, and thus Brahma came to have four heads. The end of the legend is, that, ashamed of loving what he regarded as his own daughter, he made the remainder of himself into Swayumbhuva, and, under this form and name, loved the

beautiful Satarupa with a clear conscience. They were the parents of the first Menù, Adima or Adam, and of his wife Iva or Eve. Of Swayumbhuva, the "father of all men," a mystical legend exists, similar in substance to the infanticides of Chronos; which legend is explained by astronomical facts. For, the Hindû mythology, though intensely metaphysical, is also eminently material, symbolising, in the most intimate union, the phenomena of physical nature with the mysterious operations of the mind, and the universal passions of humanity. At once metaphysical and scientific, it is also poetic to a wonderful degree; graceful and gracious, beautiful and varied, but profound and learned.

Brahma's court — the gorgeous picture of Merù — is a poem in itself. In the centre of the circle of the universe, or, rather, in the heart of the mythical lotos which sprang from Vishnû, and which is the germ of all things, stands Merù — "high, and of four colours, of four sides, is this golden mountain, the greatest of all;" to the east white, yellow to the south, black to the westward, and to the north, red as the rising day. It is the largest of all mountains; "a form consisting of many-coloured jewels;" the abode of various tribes of righteous men, who have been persecuted off the face of the general earth by the violence of the wicked; "like gold, like the dawning morn, resplendent with a thousand petals, like a thousand

water-pots, with a thousand leaves." Within it are the "self-moving cars" of the gods, beautiful as things of heaven, belonging to divinities, should be. In the petals are the abodes of all the gods, where they dwell with their wives in happiness and joy, under eternal sunlight, shaded by wondrous trees, such as grow only on Meru; and supreme above all, resides Brahma, — "he who knows the Vedas," (the Sacred Writings of Hindusthan, originally transmitted from Brahma,) the greatest of all the great. In the East, is Indra, the Lord of Heaven, sitting on "self-moving cars," as dazzling as a thousand suns. He gives music and nectar to the gods, and holds the merriest court of all: filling in himself the divided functions of the Apollo and Ganymede of our youth. In the immediate presence of the four-headed God Brahma, dwell the seven glorious Rishis (the seven stars of the Great Bear,) about whose starry wives, the Pleiades, such naughty scandal was so long afloat; and by the Rishis, in their dazzling crowns and shining robes, sits the Lord of Wealth, with ten thousand eyes, like living gems, set over and about him. There also is the "self-moving car" of the God of Fire, variegated with a hundred sorts of metals, the like of which no mortal has ever dreamed of; there, too, is the court of Yama, surnamed the Beautiful; there, too, is the court of Varuna, the Lord of Ocean, the prototype of our old friend

Neptune, with his sea-weed hair. The Lord of the Zodiac sits on his dark-blue lazuli throne, and Siva glooms heavily on a golden car, flashing with ten thousand rays; crowds of the lesser gods, sons, brothers, and impersonations of the Triad; the celestial minstrels called Gandharvas; the nymphs, or Apsaras, with the beautiful Rhemba in the midst; the great snakes as attendants; the morning stars; the sons of God; and all things beautiful and pure are here, all singing praises to the Lord of Life and Matter — Brahma the uncreated! On every side, flow rivers of gold, dividing the great mountain into separate dales and portions. The buttresses or supports are also of gold, and are set all about with vimanas (or self-moving cars) for the gods, formed of black and red coral intermixed, buried in heaps of marvellous flowers. And on the mountain sides, are trees such as mortal eyes never saw; flowers "like great waterpots with leaves," whose fragrance is strong a thousand miles off — flowers with open calices pouring out scent, like living dew on the ground; trees, under whose shade are life and immortality, as blossoms or fruit falling from their boughs; rivers of honey, and of the gold from whence all the adornments of the gods are formed; last of all, the tree, of mysterious name and mystic virtue, which the gods and the Gandharvas worship — the venerable Tree of Immortality. Such are the wonders of this place

— the home of the gods, and the throne of Brahma!

What a truly Eastern picture it is! — Gold in profusion, as if gold were a real virtue; “self-moving cars;” or the powers of Nature tricked out for a child’s fairy tale — flowers, trees, stars, snakes, gods — all that would most please the ardent, untaught imagination, piled up like countless ores within a mine! And yet, it is very beautiful. There is a child-like freshness and simplicity about its very gorgeousness which may not win our love, but which must command our regard: and, though it may not be the highest style of poetry, yet it is true poetry of its kind. “Olympus in Thessaly” was more noble in its conception, because more simple; but the mystic charm lingers most round Merù: the oldest form of heaven that we know.

The Paradise, called Kailysa, of Mahadevi and Parvati, is somewhat different. Parvati, we have observed before, is Mahadevi’s wife — his saeti, or energy — the female representation of his powers. All the gods, in each of their impersonations, have their saetis; even Brahma possessing a Saraswati as his queen.

On a tiger-skin, spread over a crimson couch, sit Mahadevi and his bride — a glory round their heads, and a golden stream of light falling on them through the azure clouds above. A silver crescent is on his forehead; and round his wrists, and in his ears, are glancing snakes of gold, tinged

with crimson. His rosary, and her broad bracelet bands, are all of gold; pearls, and emeralds, rubies, diamonds, and sapphires, blaze in the light from every part of their persons. A necklace round his throat, and a necklace on his breast; a pendant chaplet crossed on her blushing bosom, and a gold-flowered net thrown back from her beautiful brow, showing the black eye tinged with a deeper blue than even that which the shade of the long lashes throw on her cheek — such are their earthly adornments. Their couch is embroidered in gold and gems, representing birds, and trees, and flowers, with almost the vividness of Nature; her hands and feet are died rose red — the “crimson of consent,” the “lotos mark,” so often sung by the poets, and met with in every description of Indian beauty; and they are covered with gems that glitter in the light. On his head, Seshnaga, the thousand headed snake, and now striped blue and white, is coiled into a beautiful turban round his yellow locks; the multiple heads make a pretty centre ornament; and, as the thousand eyes move restlessly about, they seem like strings of diamonds set over with pearls and sapphires. There, and thus, they sit; Parvati leaning fondly on her Lord’s bosom, and every now and then giving him to drink of the amrita (the ambrosia of Hindùs-than) — the immortal and divine drink of the gods — from a cup of gold, jewelled like all the rest. But they are not alone in their pa-

radise. As their guests, may be seen, Vishnù, seated on his vahan or vehicle — Garuda, the cherub-formed, with the body of an eagle; Ganesa, elephantine and wise; and the Hindû god-of-arms, the young hero Carteciya, both sons of Mahadevi; and they fan him with the long white ox-tails, used to this day in the courts of the dusky Indian princes. And before the divine pair, Apsaras sing to their lutes, and play ravishing music, more exquisite than even the unearthly strains of Orpheus, which charmed the very dead to life again. The lotos and the clustering blossoms of the voluble "asocæ" wave under the fresh airs, which others of the nymphs create by their large peacock-fans; and Parvati's long hair flows adorned around, rippling into light curls, as the feathers brush past it; and she flings it back with her rosy fingers, dipping them for coolness in the fountains that plash up from the eternal source of waters. The amra-flower, which tips one of the five darts of love, grows in profusion round the crimson couch — birds sing in the blue clouds — waters dance in the golden light — music, beauty, youth, flowers — the luscious drops of the drink of the Gods — make up Mahadevi's heaven. Was the island of Calypso more beautiful than the gardens of Kailysa? — were the fields of Asphodel more lovely than the home of Parvati? If the Elysian plains, foreshadowed in this paradise, had been translated into Hindû, and if Kailysa had

been rythmed in Greek, men would not have been long at a loss which to choose; the glowing, vivid, living forms of the one against the pale, calm statuesque, though so noble images of the other.

But to return to Brahma, the chief subject of this present mythological memoir.

The enmity between Brahma and Siva still continued; as when did not matter and spirit, creation and destruction, the beginning and time, war ever in this world! It was carried even into their mortal shapes, where it had disastrous consequences enough. Brahma was incorporated once in the form of Dachsha — sometimes called himself, sometimes his son. Dachsha partook of the original nature of boastfulness; swaggering about this world of men, as much as Brahma before him had swaggered over the illimitable body of Mahadeva. In full assembly, one day, he affirmed that he was the supreme ruler of mankind; the god-parliament rose up and did him honour on the strength of the assertion. Mahadevi, who had had a taste of the Brahma characteristics before, was indignant at this continued lying; he kept his seat, bit his thumb, knit his brow, and looked in a general state of bile and discontent. Dachsha resented the blue-throated God's contumacy, cursing him in his human shape, and wishing that he might remain a vagabond for ever on the face of the earth. He ordered, also, that he should be avoided by all well-disposed

citizens, and deprived of his share of the sacrifices and offerings. Mahadevi threw back the gracious sentence, and a terrible affray took place. The gods were alarmed, and the "three worlds" (heaven, earth and hell) trembled: at last the combatants were separated, and a Punic faith established between them. To cement the truce, Dachsha gave his daughter Sati in marriage to Mahadevi, and for a time "things went merry as a wedding-bell."

Now Srideva, the wife of Dachsha, had no son. She had one hundred and one daughters, but never a male among them — all "lotos-bearers," no warriors nor sages. Deeply lamenting, she and her husband Dachsha convened a general assembly of the gods and men to make a solemn sacrifice and prayer. Mahadevi alone was left out of the invitation cards, in pursuance of the general system of "spiteing" carried on between the two. Now Mahadevi was not small-minded; he cared nothing for the affront, and would have let it pass by, quietly enough, but for Sati. She, though Dachsha's own daughter, was excessively angry; and in spite of all her husband's remonstrances, persisted in her intention of going to the fête masked. Like a malignant fairy, she sped through the air, gained the assembly just at the most important moment, and flung herself into the sacrificial fire at the very instant when the vow was to be fulfilled. Mahadevi had a dim sense of deco-

rum, and a proper respect for his creed. To punish the sacrilegious goddess, he cursed her to a transmigration of one thousand years. Poor Sati's body fell lifeless to the ground, while her soul flew upward, calling "cuckoo! cuckoo!" in the shape of a pretty little Pica. Mahadevi became a Pica to please her, and so they flew away together to one of the trees on Meru. Mahadevi then went to Dachsha, and abused him soundly. At last he took to beating him. The assembly was in an uproar. The gods took the part of Dachsha, and led poor Mahadevi a sad life. He was almost conquered when he struck the ground with the locks of his hair, and instantly two heroes and a whole army of demons rose up from their mother's breast; cut off Dachsha's head in the twinkling of an eye; wounded the sun and moon; and left Mahadevi master of the field. On the prayer of the gods, sent up in a round robin, Dachsha was restored to life. But, his head was missing; nowhere to be found — a poor, foolish, straying head, sadly wanted by its trunk! At last, after much fruitless search, a goat's head was brought and set on Dachsha's shoulders. Dachsha came to life on the spot. He was very weak and sickly, however, and did not recover himself until a second incarnation. Mahadevi then took up the body of his darling Sati, and rushed seven times round the world, howling horribly. And here we may remark that all the gods, under every misfortune,

do just the same thing — they rush frantically round the earth seven times, neither more nor less, and howl most frightfully all the time.

Thus ends his drama.

WHAT I CALL SENSIBLE LEGISLATION.

I AM probably an older man than you, Mr. Conductor; I have watched the world for three-score and ten years; and let me tell you that you have a good deal yet to learn. No doubt you think it very high-minded to look upon that age of the world in which Household Words is being published as superior to all past ages, and the race of men who purchase Household Words as more enlightened than their ancestors. You may think it high-minded; but I know it is little-minded. I have seen the world, and am a man of the world, and I know the selfish motives by which men are actuated. I have too much experience to be deceived. If my juniors don't blush under my observation, it is modesty they want, not cause of shame.

And you, Sir. I have just been reading a back number of your journal.* I always read back numbers of newspapers and journals, as a habit, in order that I may form an opinion on the topics debated in them, after all effervescence has gone off. So, I think, you should drink champagne after it has stood an hour, if you would

* Referring to the original publication, which appeared in weekly numbers.

know the substantial value of the wine.

Hearing the other day, for the first time, of your journal, I inquired its age; and, being told that it had reached the mature figure of ninety, I resolved to take it in. I therefore ordered my bookseller to supply me weekly with a number. Missing, of course, the period of extreme youth and silliness, I determined to begin with you at the age of twenty-one. I have now read your number twenty-one. Therein, after wading, with many a cold shiver, through articles on Railways, Water-supply, Education, Lieutenant Waghorn, and such matters, which you seem to think extremely worthy of attention, I came at last, by way of climax, to an article in which you undertake to cast ridicule on legislative enactments emanating from our forefathers. It bears the ribald title of "Comic Leaves from the Statute Book." You begin to talk of "manifest absurdities" in the first line. Sir, I will not condescend to bandy words with you; but, if you will allow me with becoming gravity to lay before your readers some examples of the truly paternal character of the government which blessed our forefathers, you will confer upon them a great favour. You will allow them, for once, to enjoy the counsels of experience, and be improved thereby.

Being a Scotchman, I shall take my stand upon the laws of my own country. You chose to laugh at English statutes; let your con-

science as a patriot judge you thereupon. It is upon the erudite parliamentary Acts of the northern part of the kingdom of Great Britain that I now take my stand, because it is with these that I am most familiar.

Let me ask any woman of experience, who is a housekeeper, whether it would not be convenient, if she could know the best and worst of her expenditure; if there were no rise and fall of prices to plunge her into a weekly struggle with the pence-table. Our contemned ancestors did not allow unprotected women to be put upon in this way. In the reign of James the Fourth of Scotland, the magistrates of towns were enjoined "to set prices upon bread, ale, and *all other necessarie things*, wrought and bought." James the Fifth appointed a commissioner "for setting prices on craftsmen's work and stuff, victual and salt." Then, the law told every man what price he was to set upon all goods in his shop: now, the tradesman is left to make for himself complex calculations, and to discover through much trouble what he ought to charge in order to insure an honest living. Queen Mary decreed that prices should be set also on wild and tame fowl. "The black cock," says her Majesty, per statute, "is to be sax pennies, and the tame hen eight pennies."

How many wars have been occasioned by intermeddling with the affairs of foreign nations? How weak it is to look abroad for

help; how manly to be self-dependent! A penny earned is more wealth than a shilling borrowed. How well our ancestors were cared for in these matters by a wise government, which gathered up into one hard strong knot the resources of the country! Charles the Second prohibited the *importation* of gold and silver lace, buttons, thread, or ribands whose gold or silver were to be found or counterfeited; linen, cambric, damask, calico, cotton, wool, lint; carpets, silk beds, stockings, shoes, boots, gloves, &c. James the Sixth had interdicted the *exportation* of "linen cloath, lint seed, candles, tallow, butter, hides, shoes, cattle, coals, flesh, horses, wool, skins, herrings," &c. Charles the Second added to the list, worsted, woollen yarn, broken copper, brass, or pewter, under pain of confiscation, one half to the king, one half to the apprehender. The British subject was evidently being taken care of; he felt every day of his life, as a child does, the paternal coercion for his good. As for navigation, it was very properly attended to. "It was forbidden that any vessel should pass out of the realm without the king's consent" (James the Sixth). It is well known what care a father takes to keep his children from uncontrolled rambling on the public highways. Nothing can be more scandalous to any family than a neglect of this precaution. The wise spirit of our ancestors perceived this, and James the Fourth enacted, "that no man,

spiritual or temporal, pass forth the realm without licence, or being abroad, do any thing against their licence." They were ordered to be good boys; and were kept out of the temptation of strange pie-men and pastrycooks by the further provision of the statute, which goes on to say— "And that they have out no money, under pain of proscription and rebellion, and to be demeaned as traitors." King James the Sixth enjoined that "youth going out of the kingdom should abide in the true religion." Every man of our ancestors knew what the true religion was, namely his own, for in the good old times every man was right, and kings informed the consciences of those who went astray. King James the Sixth goes on to order, "that such as send their sons abroad have a special care that their stay may be where the true religion is professed, specially where they want pedagogues; at least where the Inquisition is not; and, in case any of these sons haunt the exercise of contrary religion, those that have the charge of them may be straiten'd to find caution, to furnish them no more money except their reasonable expences to bring them home." In that way truth was properly protected.

Money was protected no less carefully. We all know how, in the present day, coin slips out of our fingers. Formerly, however, Britons were commanded by the law to hold it tight. Under Charles the Second, a strict Act was passed,

"appointing merchants to swear before the Treasurer not to export coined money; nor suffer the same to be exported; nor to conceal the exporting thereof. And that no merchant or skipper trade or make voyage to any forraign place before they take the said oath." And there is only allowed to passengers sixty pounds (Scots pounds, twelfths of a pound sterling,) for their charges; and all licenses are discharged, except to such as should make faith, or give bond, that the money is to be bestowed for timber in Norway, or "for victual in time of extream dearth; and that they shall return the superflus."

Perhaps, next to a country's God and its gold, its game is the most important object of a wise king's care. Guns having spoilt the sport of huntsmen (who were limited to men having a certain amount of landed property), by an act of Queen Mary's Parliament the killing of game with fire-arms was prohibited on pain of death. James the Sixth, tempering justice with mercy, limited the punishment to forty days' imprisonment for the first offence, and the cutting off of the right hand for a second. This law extended to pigeons — a protection which those peaceful animals deserved. The "gents" who disgrace our own days by pigeon-shooting at the Red House, Battersea, would all have been brought to the scaffold in Queen Mary's reign. The stealing of these birds, also — which could

belong only to the noble or the rich — was made a capital offence.

The reading of your twenty-first number has been enough to show me the necessity that exists in our own day for a judicious supervision of the press. A free press soon becomes irreverent, and takes a pride in setting up the present over the past, and talking dreamily about the future. Our ancestors were saved, by the care of their rulers, from all trouble on this score. Their reading was selected for them by their Government, as a child's books are chosen carefully by a judicious father. Queen Mary ordained "that no printer presume, attempt, or take upon hand to print any books, ballads, songs, blasphemies, rhymes, or tragedies, either in Latin or English tongue, in any times to come, until the time the same be seen, viewed, and examined by some wise and discreet persons deputed thereto; and thereafter a license had and obtained from Our Sovereign Lady, for imprinting of such books, under the pain of confiscation of all the printer's goods, and banishing him of the realm for ever." We are afflicted now, I think, by blasphemies, rhymes, and tragedies; and we deserve the affliction — *you* do. I disclaim participation in the follies of this vain age. You suffer the affliction — the plague of poets, which was spared even to Pharaoh; and it serves you right for laughing at your ancestors, and breaking

down the barriers erected by their wisdom.

We Scotchmen were protected in the days I speak of against English cunning. Under James the First none of us were allowed to buy cloth of an Englishman in or out of Scotland. We were not suffered to send our good salmon over our border; but Englishmen might eat it in Scotland, if they paid for it in ready money, with English coin (James the Second). Any Englishman entering Scotland without a safe-conduct might be made prisoner. Under James the Sixth, it was also "statute and ordained be our Sovereign Lord and the three Estates of this Parliament, That none of his subjects presume to take upon hand to marry with any English woman dwelling in the opposite marches, without his Highness's express license had and obtained to that effect, under the Great Seal under the pain of death, and confiscation of all his goods moveable; and that this be a special point of duty *in all time coming*." King James knew nothing then of what you call the "good time coming," which would break down in a lawless manner all these wholesome institutions. People now scarcely condescend to know where the Scotch border is: they call it a geographical term, a practical nullity, except as it concerns Gretna marriages, and other matters equally indifferent. I believe it is, in the present day, a common thing to ridicule the Cockney sportsmen who dis-

charge their guns, through inexpertness, into unoffending bodies of donkeys, gamekeepers, and others. But how much more practical and sensible it would be if we put the Cockneys down! By the first of James the Sixth, no man could shoot with or carry guns, under the pain of cutting off the righthand. Pastime within one's own court was permitted, however, and mariners at sea, men-of-war in actual pay, parties going to or coming back from musters, or in pursuit of thieves, might bear arms and be exempt from penalty.

We grumble at the overcharge habitually made by cabmen; yet we go on paying. Ferry-men were the cabmen necessary in many places to our forefathers, and they also took advantage of their power over fares. Did our ancestors content themselves with joking and squabbling on the subject? No, indeed, they were practical men. Under an Act of Mary's reign, it was decreed that a single person could cross the Forth or Tay for fourpence, a horse should cost fourpence extra, and so forth — overcharges being made, there was no timid compromise, no shilly-shally. The offender was punished out of hand, himself with death, and his heirs and assigns with confiscation of his property. Be assured, Sir, that is the true law for cabmen. Kill them, and confiscate their property.

We make a common talk, and nothing more — a common care,

a common worry, over negligence in servants. Under James the First, in case of accidental fire, servants were liable. Fine, corporal punishment, and banishment for three or seven years, made it their interest to mind where they (or their masters and mistresses) put the candles.

Paternal oversight protected the amusements of our ancestors. Persons convicted of drunkenness, or haunting of taverns and ale-houses after ten o'clock at night, or any time of day, except the time of travel or for refreshment, paid for the first offence three pounds, or were fastened to a wall for six hours, in an iron necklace, or had the six hours in gaol; for the second fault, five pounds, or double allowance of necklace or of gaol; for the next fault, double the last punishment, and after that, confinement, till they gave security for good behaviour. Robin Hood, Little John, Queens of the May, and Abbots of Unreason, were thundered against to good purpose, with a penalty of five years' gaol if they attempted any of their nonsense. As for those nuisances called Jack-in-the-Green, and such like, I will for once give you a bit of an Act in the fine old vernacular. "And gif onie women or uthers about Summer Trees sing and makis perturbation to the Queen's lieges in the passage through towns, the women perterbatoures for skufrie of money or uthewise, sall be taken, handled, and put upon the cuckstules of everie burgh." Oh,

that we had our ancestors to legislate for organ-boys and Ethiopian serenaders!

Under James the Sixth, filial tenderness was promoted by an Act of Parliament, under which children beating or cursing parents, were to be put to death "without mercie." But if the offender should be younger than sixteen, his punishment should be left to the discretion of the judge.

To select the dresses of the children is of course a parent's duty, and in this respect the kings, in the good time that is gone by, were not remiss. Minute details of the dress legal in each rank are converted into Acts of Parliament. Under James the Second it is at last ordained that the king make a pattern of each habit which shall be thereafter in each rank the standard dress. Just as an imperial quart is made to be a standard measure.

Parents know also how much it is good for little boys to eat; so a paternal Government controlled the dinners of its subjects. Under Queen Mary it was ordained that "no bishop or earl have more than eight dishes at his table; a lord, abbot, or dean six; a baron, four; a burgess, three. Only one kind of meat to be in each dish." Penalties considerable. Marriages and public banquets were excepted. James the Sixth prohibited the dishing up of "foreign drugs or confections;" forbade banquets after baptisms, and ordered that at all dinner parties'

doors be left open for the free ingress of spies." Spies are not unwelcome to a well-regulated people. Why should children shrink from encountering the ever-present eyes of an attentive father?

It evidently irks you that the Wisdom of our Ancestors should be a Household Word. That is the result of inexperience on your part. I have taken down simply one folio of the Statutes, which breaks off with Charles the Second, and with a few blows from that volume I have laid you prostrate. You perceive now clearly that you have not a leg to stand upon, in prosecution of your course of argument. After the previous exposition of the care exercised over the comfort of the people by our forefathers, you may well lament with me the folly of the age. Lament also for me, drifting unwillingly on your wild sea of license, — liberty you call it, — compelled, while cherishing my ancestors, to live among my children. Nothing can save the country now; it has fallen. I need not particularise, but it has fallen —

"Into what pit thou seest,
From what height fallen!"

From such a height that certainly its neck is broken. Let me say no more.

GOING CIRCUIT AT THE ANTIPODES.

DELIGHTFUL is the morning when, after a tedious voyage, just as you begin to wonder where all the continents and islands in the world can be hidden, a lusty voice shouts "Land, ho!" from the mast-head. And there, as we see now from the deck, is a long wall of coast, which appears suddenly to have stepped out of a cloud! And there, too, is the lighthouse!

The ship's nose is immediately put in the right direction, and in about half-an-hour we descry a boat bobbing up and down in the swell of the sea. She is rowed by about half-a-dozen athletic, copper-coloured New Zealanders, and steered by a pleasant-looking pilot, seated in the stern-sheets. We have scarcely time to wonder why we think this pilot worthy of being taken to our hearts and embraced, before he springs on board, asks for the news, shakes hands with, and deposes, the captain, who retires into insignificance, whilst the New Zealanders, having made fast their boat to our stern, sit and criticise us at their leisure.

With the usual luffing and shouting of "tacks and sheets," and the average driving about of the sailors, by the uncompromisingly despotic pilot, we find ourselves entering between the huge heads of Port Jackson. In about a quarter of an hour more, we are safely out of the vast

Pacific, and gliding along the serene and sparkling surface of Sydney harbour.

Picturesque and Claude-like as this scene is at all times, it is strikingly so when you enter it for the first time, after a four months' voyage. You appear to be sailing up a beautiful lake, delightfully variegated with islands dotted about upon its transparently blue water. On either side, little promontories jut out into the harbour, crowned by mansions, cottages, and windmills, all bright and glowing in the clear air; while the eye in vain endeavours to penetrate to the heads of all the pretty little bays which are formed by the irregularities of the shore. At all times, in favourable weather, the harbour is alive with boats which skim like sea-birds round a newly-arrived London ship. The harbour being completely land-locked and protected from all weathers, we sail out of a rough sea, into water almost as smooth as a mill-dam. So sudden is the change from rough to smooth, that we seem to have reached a charmed and silent region, where some good Prospero works his tranquillising spells. We are very soon, however, reduced from Shakesperean fancies to matters of fact, by the sounds of "Want a boat, Sir?" startling us in our reverie, like the ghost of a voice from the Thames.

We got — I and my wife — into the waterman's boat. The child-like and warm-hearted tars give us three hearty cheers as we are

pulled away from the ship's side; and, after about ten minutes' passage up the harbour, and into Sydney Cove, among shipping from all parts of the world, we pull up at the Queen's Wharf. We pay the waterman a shilling, astonished to find the nature and uses of that coin so distinctly understood at the Antipodes, and are once again on terra-firma.

The early part of the day appeared to have been rainy in town, and the place was wet and puddled. The footpaths were merely paved in patches here and there, and three-story houses of bad-complexioned brick were huddled up, with wretched hovels of weather-board, and occasionally vacant spaces, or dust-heaps. Here and there, a dray, or a mouldy-looking superannuated gig, behind an ungroomed horse, as dripping and dejected as if he were serving out a sentence of hard labour, were almost all the vehicles we met. The singular frequency, too, of the children of Israel — at times unpleasantly economical of soap — was not, upon the whole, more exhilarating than the prevalence of badly-cut slop apparel, in windows and at doors. A good part of Monmouth Street had apparently got the start of us, and had already settled down, squalidly well-off, as at home.

Public-houses were in a good force, addressing themselves to the colonial thirst by the usual eye-catching announcements in long black letters, down the fronts of various tenements, "that Guin-

ness's XXX," or "Allsopp's Ale," or "London Particular," might be had inside. The live part of the scene generally consisted of sailors, brokers, clerks, draymen, New Zealanders, one or two aboriginal blacks, and one or two score of goats and dogs. Upon the whole, we were very much astonished by our first impression; for, we somewhat hastily adopted this quarter of the town as a fair sample of the whole. We concluded about as wisely and as justly as a Frenchman would, if he were suddenly to judge of London from a hasty glance at Wapping. Every large port must have a Wapping, and here was the Sydney Wapping; the only difference being, that it was a Wapping in its teens.

Taking our ease in our inn the first night — and what ease, after such a voyage! — we sallied out, in the bright delicious freshness of the following morning, to investigate the field of our future operations. I qualify my sketch with the results of a subsequent nine years' experience.

The habits and fashions of a people stick to them wherever they go. Algiers would probably now remind us of Paris, as Sydney certainly reminds us of many a sea-port town that we have seen in England. There is the same style of houses and shops, and plate-glass fronts. On all sides you see a bustling throng of merchants, tradesmen, clerks, porters, sea-captains, operatives, farmers, and long-bearded squat-

ters, in tweeds. Men of business on horseback, and in every kind of carriage, from the most stylish phaeton, to the rustiest of primeval gigs, pour from the picturesque suburbs into town after breakfast. Drays pass to and fro with all sorts of merchandise from ships. Other drays, in the wool season, are bringing in their bales of wool, for shipment to London. Omnibuses rattle by. Rows of handsome hackney carriages — once private, but which insolvency of former owners has placed at the disposal of the public — occupy their respective stands; their drivers evincing the same taste for extortion as their English brethren. The butcher's boy calls for orders; the baker, enthroned on his cart, dispenses his bread with English punctuality. The "vegetable man" takes his rounds with his pony cart (donkeys being almost unknown), and cries carrots and turnips as excruciatingly as in the old world. Fishmongers' shops there are none; supplies in this line being brought to the doors by men with barrows. One of these dealers well stocked with bream, snapper, whiting, flathead, &c., you may occasionally see (as you pass along the street,) chaffering with servant girls at the door-steps; and, upon the conclusion of the bargain, set about bleeding a lobster, as large — without any exaggeration — as a new-born baby.

In the after-part of the day, the town, of course, undergoes a change in the appearance of the

wayfarers. Here, again, we tread closely upon the heels of the Londoners. Ladies in a colony by no means lose their taste for shopping. From three to five o'clock, you may see plenty of neat boots and sandalled insteps twinkling across the pavement, every few yards, between shops and carriages, and carriages and shops; and that abominable speech, "What is the next article, Madam?" punishes husbands equally on both sides of the world. Gay officers, charming fellows, scatter fascination as they lounge along. In the evening you may go to the theatre and hear an opera — "Fra Diavolo," "Maritana," or the "Bohemian Girl" — performed as well as in any provincial theatre of the mother country. The Jews and the operatives, with a sprinkling of other classes, are the steadiest supporters of the drama. The aristocracy — don't smile! We *have* an aristocracy; how could Englishmen get on without one! — the aristocracy eschew the drama as vulgar, except when the Governor goes.

At midnight you leave the theatre. If intent upon devilled kidneys, native oysters, or any other established form of post-theatrical supper, you can be accommodated at a variety of good taverns, and at moderate rates. If you are a sensible man, you wend your way homewards, astonished, perhaps, to find that this great felonious city of the South (as depicted by the Earl of Shaftesbury) is actually as quiet as a Scotch

town in church time. And yet, lighted by gas as you go, you are walking on ground which, little more than sixty years ago, was a mere bush — nursery of kangaroos and opossums.

From this city, after the discovery of California, until within the last few months, people of the middle and working classes poured by thousands into the great American Dorado. And although our population — that is to say, the population of the town alone — had attained, before this curious migration commenced, to something near sixty thousand souls; and although George Street, Sydney, was nearly as long as Oxford Street, London; the colonists generally began to have serious fears about so heavy a drain upon a country, which, at the best of times, is but ill-supplied with labour. In due time, however, news arrived of Californian fever, Californian ague, Californian revolvering, and Californian potatoes at tenpence a pound; all which items of intelligence coming together, naturally abated the fever for moving. Again, however, it broke out, about twelve months ago; and, ship-load after ship-load of human beings, many of them far from poor, left Port Jackson for San Francisco — a two months' voyage. Now, New South Wales has opened a Dorado of her own, and the hungerers for wealth are running back from California to their old colony.

My own "diggins" were in the Supreme Court. I had therefore,

for some years, little travel in this interesting country, other than such as an attendance on the circuits imposed. These circuits are held twice a year; at Maitland, Goulburn, Moreton Bay, and Bathurst, the new gold field. One trip to Maitland will put you fully in possession of the travelling means and appliances, and the common life, of the colony at large.

My first Maitland trip was made under auspices very favourable to my acquiring knowledge of the state of the country. A fellow-counsel had invited myself, my wife, and child, to spend a few days with him at his place on the Hunter, on our way to the assize town, and we all started together.

By train? No; towards that sort of thing we only turned the first turf a few months ago; and if you had only heard all the fine things said on that occasion, you would have been astonished at the modesty of Britons. At ten o'clock, P. M., the two counsel, each with a wife and child, left their houses for the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company's wharf, situate on that branch of the magnificent Port Jackson, called Darling Harbour.

Coaches, cabs, drays, trucks, and highly-excited porters were making an astounding din. The storm of goods, packages, and parcels of all kinds for the Hunter — Sydney being the heart through which all manufactured supplies are passed into the Hunter River district — gave a very strong

Thames Street expression to the scene. Through this Babel we gained the deck of the beautiful boat, the "Rose;" the bell rang; we ran down the harbour, and in half-an-hour were pitching (as we passed through the heads) on the heavy ground swell of the great Pacific. I could not pass through that mighty gap in the iron-bound coast, without a sort of admiring wonder at the vast strides which Englishmen had made in this part of the world, since Cook, in his good ship "Endeavour," first sighted, some sixty years since, the strange land. Here were we quite at home in a first-rate English-built steamer; her swift wheels grasping the great seas, and throwing them contemptuously behind her, as she flew onward upon her course. Here were London barristers going circuit on the South Pacific! I thought of man's triumphs over the deep, until I distinctly felt the deep triumphing over me — whereupon I went below.

The cabin was, and is (for the beautiful "Rose" still runs), large and well lighted; along two tiers of shelves, on which the beds were made, reclined all the male passengers in layers, and one over the other, like bodies in a family vault. Here, we lay for the next five or six hours. No human sound mixed itself with the incessant creaking and thrashing of the ocean by our paddles, except an occasional faint and plaintive cry of, "Steward!" Thus we all remained until dawn, when the mate

cried down the stairs, "Any one for Newcastle?"

We went up. We found we were near the great Breakwater being formed by convicts: a yellow and brown parti-coloured swarm of whom were watching us as we rounded "Nobby's," a high rock. This Breakwater, since finished, makes Newcastle a safe and excellent port, in which vessels of any tonnage may lie in any wind. In a few minutes we passed once again into smooth water (after a night run of eight hours along the coast), and presently were alongside the wharf at Newcastle, a dull, dingy, coal-producing spot. Here, staying an hour, we took in fuel, and then steamed for the mouth of the Hunter, near which Newcastle is situate. The banks of this river were low, flat, and uninteresting. Between clumps of dwarf mango-trees, I could just catch glimpses of what seemed yellow enough to be a bit of the Great Desert; and in this part small groups of cattle appeared to be engaged in a severe search for grass. I learned that this yellow-looking vegetation was a kind of marshy reed, of which cattle are passionately fond. In about an hour — the river being for the whole distance about as broad as the Thames at Westminster — we arrived at our destination, the vessel ran up to Walker's wharf, and we landed at once upon his property.

A long and winding road, cut through the forest of gum-trees, conducted us to his then temporary

house. Having breakfasted, we sallied forth to look at the property. Along the river-side, varying in depth inland, the soil is commonly very rich, as is usually the case on the banks of Australian rivers. Here, were settled, some in slab huts, others in cottages of rather better description, about twenty or thirty tenants renting small portions of land on clearing leases; the little homesteads being visible from the steamer, as she passed up or down the river. I visited these cottages, inspected the little farms, talked with the tenants (who were glad to find an attentive listener to their narratives of early difficulties conquered by perseverance), and found that all but one had been the very poorest bounty emigrants from England and Ireland. They did not disguise that they had flown from little better than starvation in their own country. Each tenant had small patches of Indian corn, wheat, barley, potatoes, and tobacco, besides a very well-stocked kitchen-garden. Some few had a cow, most of them possessed pigs, and all were overrun with abundance of poultry of every kind. The virgin soil gave them two crops a year of everything, for a mere scratching on the surface. All mere animal wants were supplied in abundance, and some few had books. There was a school, but no church nearer than Raymond Terrace, distance some seven or eight miles. In the course of our long walk this day, we stumbled across a king. Kings are by no means uncommon in this country. I have had a king and two or three black princes, all warming themselves together upon a dust-heap in my back-yard in Sydney. Walker's present king was as black as a coal: limited in respect of apparel, and, to the best of my nose, not happy in the royal perfumer. Round his neck, hanging by a string, was a brass plate (like a waterman's badge), with his name and rank, King Toocooioo, engraved on it. This plate, of which he was as proud (and why not?) as if it were a blue riband or a garter, had been originally given to him by some settler, and it was always worn as a badge of dignity among his tribe. The king was easy in his manners, lithe as a panther in his movements, and allowed no false delicacy to stand between him and his royal comfort. After obtaining Walker's leave to call upon his kitchen, he demanded of him (pointing deliberately at me), "Who dis swell, Sar?" Now, as I was dressed in plain black, I was a little disconcerted at this frank and sincere description of my personal appearance, and was at first inclined to think that our black friend thought every man a dandy who was effeminate enough to wear a pair of pantaloons. I afterwards learned that the blacks, in acquiring our language, have seldom had any other masters than the assigned convict-servants of the settlers, and that the word "swell" is used as seriously as we use the word "gentleman."

This king had left his subjects, or, rather, his companions (for they paid him neither respect nor taxes), a few miles up the river, at the Government township, called Raymond Terrace; and, upon hearing of the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Walker, his majesty had hastened down to pay his respects, and establish himself comfortably about the premises.

The king, always, summer and winter, slept in the open air; and, so far, was right royal enough in his exemption from rent and taxes. Lords of the bed-chamber were wanting, it is true; and what was perhaps of still more importance, blankets and sheets. I had a great desire to see his majesty in bed — if such an expression may be used — and, at about nine o'clock in the evening, I prevailed upon Walker to go forth with me, from his own cheerful fire-side, to beat up the black king's quarters.

The night was dark, and, for New South Wales, cold. We took a plate full of honey-comb with us as a present to His Majesty. About three or four hundred yards off in the forest, and within forty or fifty yards of one of the white men's huts, we saw and heard the black man's fire crackling and blazing cheerily, and lighting up the sides of the trees and of the hut with a rich glare. Strange, and passing melancholy sight, this startling contrast between civilised and savage life. Under that cottage roof was reposing a snug family of whites, tucked in amongst sheeting and British blankets; and there,

only a few yards off, in the star-light night, is a black brother, whose only lodging is "on the cold ground." The white peasant, it is to be hoped, says his prayers; the black king, it is to be feared, has no sense, or if any, the most vague sense, of religion or of Deity.

As we approached, I was a little surprised that no living figure could be seen near the fire. "Oh!" said Walker, "he is gone perhaps to try to get an opossum for his supper." We had approached within two or three yards of the fire, without discovering our friend, and I had concluded that he was away somewhere in the woods, when suddenly I started as I saw what at first looked like a huge black maggot wriggling about under a very rude structure of bows, placed against the wind, and on the other side of the fire. A second glance showed me the king. Completely unrobed, he was rolling about in ecstasies of warmth. He looked like an animal roasting itself alive, and liking it. We presented our honey-comb, which he ate (wax and all), and when done, he again abandoned himself to his repose, without thanking us, or bidding us good night, or asking us to take any thing — except the plate, after he had cleaned it carefully with his forefinger.

After a stay of seven or eight days, Walker and myself, leaving our wives behind, mounted a pair of his horses for the purpose of proceeding through the Bush to

Maitland, where the causes were to be tried by the then Chief Justice (since dead); and with the trifling colonial incident of passing a night in a slab hut, we arrived at Maitland, by ten o'clock next morning. We pricked our steeds into the hotel, not unworthy of old England; and after a hearty breakfast at the bar mess, donned our wigs and gowns for action. Our Chief Justice had a charge prepared, and we were all expected to attend and hear it.

As soon as this preachment, and the proclamation against vice and profaneness, had duly provoked the wit of the bystanders, the Solicitor-General required two blacks to be put to the bar, charged with spearing cattle, the property of a settler. The names in which these sable offenders rejoiced, were Wellington and Fryingpan; playful appellatives, originally conferred upon them by some of the convict-servants of neighbouring settlers. For some reason, which I now forget, Fryingpan was not tried, but Wellington was duly brought up. He was a tall gaunt fellow, apparently about thirty-five years old (but probably much younger, as these blacks soon age in appearance), with large, flashing, expressive, deep-set eyes. A dirty blanket was his only covering; a huge mop of coarse matted black hair, hung about his shoulders; and he had mouth enough for two faces. He was led in by the Chief Constable, and, as it was obviously his first appearance upon that stage, he

was by no means perfect in the part of a prisoner. He required considerable shoving and pulling to get him into a sort of bin, called the dock; and probably if he had been left to himself, he would have selected a seat beside the judge.

When fairly confronted with Sir James, a violent grin broke out half round Wellington's head, evidently caused by his Honour's wig, bands, and red gown, on which the savage's eyes seemed to be fastened with a fascinated stare. Nor did he, in his unsophisticated nature, attempt to conceal the emotion excited within him; for, notwithstanding the additional gravity laid on by the judge for the occasion, the joke appeared to improve so much in the black man's mind, that at last he laughed outright. Moreover he seemed to grin a kind of circular invitation to all the people in Court to join in the laugh with him. He grinned the rebukeful countenance of the Sheriff into such a state, that that solemn officer of justice was obliged abruptly to turn his face away, and discharge a short private laugh of his own. He grinned at the counsel and the crowd, until giggling became irrepressible, and even the countenance of the Chief Justice, who had a keen perception of the ludicrous, was becoming rapidly unmanageable.

As soon as this general break-out had been duly snubbed and got under, it became necessary to appoint an interpreter to act between the prisoner and the

crown, as the prisoner was utterly ignorant of English. A white man who understood, or professed to understand, Wellington's particular dialect, was in Court, and being sworn duly to interpret, the information (in England, the indictment) was read and translated to the prisoner. The Chief Justice, looking as unconscious as he could of the fact that Wellington was still half swooning with delight, called upon him, through the interpreter, to plead to the information. The interpreter having translated and apparently explained it, a short, voluble, and eager conversation of some minutes ensued, before the black appeared to comprehend what was required of him. At last he mastered it, and promptly delivering his answer, the interpreter proceeded with respectful gravity to communicate it to the Court. "May it please your honour, he only says it's all a pack of lies, and that *he* never speared the cattle at all; but he thinks he knows the black fellow that did spear them, and he will bring him down to the Court in a few days, if your honour will allow him to go and look for him." This is a style of defence as popular among the blacks as an *alibi* may be in England. Wellington, however, was contradicted by several witnesses who took him in the fact, and therefore he was found guilty, and sentenced to transportation for ten years to Van Diemen's Land. He was removed from the bar, looking as if he had got to

the end of a pleasant entertainment, and as if the memory of the Chief Justice's wig would be a solace to him in his saddest hours.

Being at this time young to the country, I felt for this cheerful Wellington. What right have we, thought I, to seize this poor child of nature, haul him into an English court of justice, mock his ignorance with a jargon of law forms, and conclude by tearing him from his hunting grounds, his wife, and little children, for ten years? How complacently we look upon his savage ignorance! and for certain he is ignorant enough; but how far are we removed from the same charge, when, by elaborate forms, and upon assumptions of his moral and legal responsibility, we try a creature who has about as clear an understanding of the whole proceeding as a dog? Yet, what else is to be done? Must not property of colonists be protected? And how may this be, unless the blacks be made amenable to the law? To shoot them, would be plain unvarnished murder, — which, however, has been extensively committed before now, — and their aggressions, unresisted, would soon swamp the colony. The colonists, therefore, become reconciled to the prosecutions of the blacks. If they cannot understand law, they understand punishment.

Nothing of criminal interest, beyond the above-described trial, took place at these assizes. We wound up, of course, as usual, with a dinner given to the judge by the

townspeople and settlers. About a hundred white waistcoats, and an almost infinite variety of badly-cut coats, sat down to a table as well covered, and in a room as well furnished, as you could meet with in old England—always kept by colonists before them for a pattern. Toasts, compliments, speech-making, and all the usual dreariness, prevailed until ten o'clock, at which hour I withdrew to bed. I tried to be deaf to the jingling of the glasses, to the hammering of the table, to the cheers, and the comic songs, and the wild roars of laughter, which increased towards midnight amongst the diners; most of whom were farmers and gentlemen-settlers of unlimited powers of digestion, and incredulous of headaches. Once or twice, indeed, as the laughter became almost too exciting for my curiosity, I could almost have got out of bed, and returned to the table in my night-gown, to request that that last "good thing" might be repeated. Gradually, I fell asleep to this wild accompaniment; perhaps fancying myself wiser, and more temperate than the hearty revellers; whereas, I was only more dyspeptic.

A LOVE AFFAIR AT CRANFORD.

I AM tempted to relate it, as having interested me in a quiet sort of way, and as being the latest intelligence of Our Society at Cranford.

I thought, after Miss Jenkyns's death, that probably my connexion with Cranford would cease; at least, that it would have to be kept up by correspondence, which bears much the same relation to personal intercourse that the books of dried plants I sometimes see, ("Hortus Siccus," I think they call the thing,) do to the living and fresh flowers in the lanes and meadows. I was pleasantly surprised, therefore, by receiving a letter from Miss Pole, (who had always come in for a supplementary week after my annual visit to Miss Jenkyns) proposing that I should go and stay with her; and then, in a couple of days after my acceptance, came a note from Miss Matey, in which, in a rather circuitous and very humble manner, she told me how much pleasure I should confer, if I could spend a week or two with her, either before or after I had been at Miss Pole's; "for," she said, "since my dear sister's death, I am well aware I have no attractions to offer; it is only to the kindness of my friends that I can owe their company."

Of course, I promised to come to dear Miss Matey, as soon as I had ended my visit to Miss Pole; and the day after my arrival at Cranford, I went to see her, much wondering what the house would be like without Miss Jenkyns, and rather dreading the changed aspect of things. Miss Matey began to cry as soon as she saw me. She was evidently nervous from having anticipated my call. I

comforted her as well as I could; and I found the best consolation I could give, was the honest praise that came from my heart as I spoke of the deceased. Miss Matey slowly shook her head over each virtue as it was named, and attributed to her sister; at last she could not restrain the tears which had long been silently flowing, but hid her face behind her handkerchief, and sobbed aloud.

"Dear Miss Matey!" said I, taking her hand — for indeed I did not know in what way to tell her how sorry I was for her, left deserted in the world. She put down her handkerchief, and said—

"My dear, I'd rather you did not call me Matey. *She* did not like it; but I did many a thing she did not like, I'm afraid — and now she's gone! If you please, my love, will you call me Matilda?"

I promised faithfully, and began to practise the new name with Miss Pole that very day; and, by degrees, Miss Matilda's feeling on the subject was known through Cranford, and the appellation of Matey was dropped by all, except a very old woman, who had been nurse in the rector's family, and had persevered, through many long years, in calling the Miss Jenkynses "the girls;" she said, "Matey," to the day of her death.

My visit to Miss Pole was very quiet. Miss Jenkyns had so long taken the lead in Cranford, that, now she was gone, they hardly knew how to give a party. The Honourable Mrs. Jamieson, to whom Miss Jenkyns herself had

always yielded the post of honour, was fat and inert, and very much at the mercy of her old servants. If they chose her to give a party, they reminded her of the necessity for so doing; if not, she let it alone. There was all the more time for me to hear old-world stories from Miss Pole, while she sat knitting, and I making my father's shirts. I always took a quantity of plain sewing to Cranford; for, as we did not read much, or walk much, I found it a capital time to get through my work. One of Miss Pole's stories related to the love affair I am coming to; — gradually, not in a hurry, for we are never in a hurry at Cranford.

Presently, the time arrived when I was to remove to Miss Matilda's house. I found her timid and anxious about the arrangements for my comfort. Many a time, while I was unpacking, did she come backwards and forwards to stir the fire, which burned all the worse for being so frequently poked.

"Have you drawers enough, dear?" asked she. "I don't know exactly how my sister used to arrange them. She had capital methods. I am sure she would have trained a servant in a week to make a better fire than this, and Fanny has been with me four months."

This subject of servants was a standing grievance, and I could not wonder much at it; for if gentlemen were scarce, and almost unheard of in the "genteel society" of Cranford, they or their

counterparts — handsome young men — abounded in the lower classes. The pretty neat servant-maids had their choice of desirable “followers;” and their mistresses, without having the sort of mysterious dread of men and matrimony that Miss Matilda had, might well feel a little anxious, lest the heads of their comely maids should be turned by the joiner, or the butcher, or the gardener; who were obliged, by their callings, to come to the house; and who, as ill-luck would have it, were generally handsome and unmarried. Fanny’s lovers, if she had any — and Miss Matilda suspected her of so many flirtations, that, if she had not been very pretty, I should have doubted her having one — were a constant anxiety to her mistress. She was forbidden, by the articles of her engagement, to have “followers;” and though she had answered innocently enough, doubling up the hem of her apron as she spoke, “Please, Ma’am, I never had more than one at a time,” Miss Matey prohibited that one. But a vision of a man seemed to haunt the kitchen. Fanny assured me that it was all fancy; or else I should have said myself that I had seen a man’s coat-tails whisk into the scullery once, when I went on an errand into the store-room at night; and another evening, when our watches having stopped, I went to look at the clock, there was a very odd appearance, singularly like a young man squeezed up between the clock and the back of the open

kitchen-door; and I thought Fanny snatched up the candle very hastily, so as to throw the shadow on the clock-face, while she very positively told me the time half-an-hour too early, as we found out afterwards by the church-clock. But I did not add to Miss Matey’s anxieties by naming my suspicions, especially as Fanny said to me, the next day, that it was such a queer kitchen for having odd shadows about it, she really was almost afraid to stay; “for you know, Miss,” she added, “I don’t see a creature from six o’clock tea, till Missus rings the bell for prayers at ten.”

However, it so fell out that Fanny had to leave; and Miss Matilda begged me to stay and “settle her” with the new maid; to which I consented, after I had heard from my father that he did not want me at home. The new servant was a rough, honest-looking country-girl, who had only lived in a farm place before; but I liked her looks when she came to be hired; and I promised Miss Matilda to put her in the ways of the house. These said ways were religiously such as Miss Matilda thought her sister would approve. Many a domestic rule and regulation had been a subject of plaintive whispered murmur, to me, during Miss Jenkyns’s life; but now that she was gone, I do not think that even I, who was a favourite, durst have suggested an alteration. To give an instance: we constantly adhered to the forms which were observed, at meal times, in “my

father the Rector's house." Accordingly, we had always wine and dessert; but the decanters were only filled when there was a party; and what remained was seldom touched, though we had two wine glasses apiece every day after dinner, until the next festive occasion arrived; when the state of the remainder wine was examined into, in a family council. The dregs were often given to the poor; but occasionally, when a good deal had been left at the last party (five months ago, it might be,) it was added to some of a fresh bottle, brought up from the cellar. I fancy poor Captain Brown did not much like wine; for I noticed he never finished his first glass, and most military men take several. Then, as to our dessert, Miss Jenkyns used to gather currants and gooseberries for it herself, which I sometimes thought would have tasted better fresh from the trees; but then, as Miss Jenkyns observed, there would have been nothing for dessert in summer-time. As it was, we felt very genteel with our two glasses apiece, and a dish of gooseberries at the top, of currants and biscuits at the sides, and two decanters at the bottom. When oranges came in, a curious proceeding was gone through. Miss Jenkyns did not like to cut the fruit; for, as she observed, the juice all ran out nobody knew where; sucking (only I think she used some more recondite word) was in fact the only way of enjoying oranges; but then there was

the unpleasant association with a ceremony frequently gone through by little babies; and so, after dessert, in orange season, Miss Jenkyns and Miss Matey used to rise up, possess themselves each of an orange in silence, and withdraw to the privacy of their own rooms, to indulge in sucking oranges.

I had once or twice tried, on such occasions, to prevail on Miss Matey to stay; and had succeeded in her sister's life-time. I held up a screen, and did not look, and, as she said, she tried not to make the noise very offensive; but now that she was left alone, she seemed quite horrified when I begged her to remain with me in the warm dining-parlour, and enjoy her orange as she liked best. And so it was in everything. Miss Jenkyns's rules were made more stringent than ever, because the framer of them was gone where there could be no appeal. In everything else Miss Matilda was meek and undecided to a fault. I have heard Fanny turn her round twenty times in a morning about dinner, just as the little hussy chose; and I sometimes fancied she worked on Miss Matilda's weakness in order to bewilder her, and to make her feel more in the power of her clever servant. I determined that I would not leave her till I had seen what sort of a person Martha was; and, if I found her trustworthy, I would tell her not to trouble her mistress with every little decision.

Martha was blunt and plain-

spoken to a fault; otherwise she was a brisk, well-meaning, but very ignorant, girl. She had not been with us a week before Miss Matilda and I were astounded one morning by the receipt of a letter from a cousin of hers, who had been twenty or thirty years in India, and who had lately, as we had seen by the Army List, returned to England, bringing with him an invalid wife, who had never been introduced to her English relations. Major Jenkyns wrote to propose that he and his wife should spend a night at Cranford, on his way to Scotland — at the inn, if it did not suit Miss Matilda to receive them into her house; in which case they should hope to be with her as much as possible during the day. Of course, it must suit her, as she said; for all Cranford knew that she had her sister's bed-room at liberty; but I am sure she wished the Major had stopped in India and forgotten his cousins out and out.

"Oh! how must I manage?" asked she, helplessly. "If Deborah had been alive, she would have known what to do with a gentleman-visitor. Must I put razors in his dressing-room? Dear! dear! and I've got none. Deborah would have had them. And slippers, and coat-brushes?" I suggested that probably he would bring all these things with him. "And after dinner, how am I to know when to get up, and leave him to his wine? Deborah would have done it so well; she would have been quite in her ele-

ment. Will he want coffee, do you think?" I undertook the management of the coffee, and told her I would instruct Martha in the art of waiting in which it must be owned she was terribly deficient; and that I had no doubt Major and Mrs. Jenkyns would understand the quiet mode in which a lady lived by herself in a country town. But she was sadly fluttered. I made her empty her decanters, and bring up two fresh bottles of wine. I wished I could have prevented her from being present at my instructions to Martha; for she continually cut in with some fresh direction, muddling the poor girl's mind, as she stood open-mouthed, listening to us both.

"Hand the vegetables round," said I (foolishly, I see now — for it was aiming at more than we could accomplish with quietness and simplicity); and then, seeing her look bewildered, I added, "Take the vegetables round to people, and let them help themselves."

"And mind you go first to the ladies," put in Miss Matilda. "Always go to the ladies before gentlemen, when you are waiting."

"I'll do it as you tell me, Ma'am," said Martha; "but I like lads best."

We felt very uncomfortable and shocked at this speech of Martha's; yet I don't think she meant any harm; and, on the whole, she attended very well to our directions, except that she

"nudged" the Major, when he did not help himself as soon as she expected, to the potatoes, while she was handing them round.

The Major and his wife were quiet, unpretending people enough when they did come; languid, as all East Indians are, I suppose. We were rather dismayed at their bringing two servants with them, a Hindoo body-servant for the Major, and a steady elderly maid for his wife; but they slept at the inn, and took off a good deal of the responsibility by attending carefully to their master's and mistress's comfort. Martha, to be sure, had never ended her staring at the East Indian's white turban, and brown complexion, and I saw that Miss Matilda shrunk away from him a little as he waited at dinner. Indeed, she asked me, when they were gone, if he did not remind me of Blue Beard? On the whole, the visit was most satisfactory, and is a subject of conversation even now with Miss Matilda; at the time it greatly excited Cranford, and even stirred up the apathetic and Honourable Mrs. Jamieson to some expression of interest when I went to call and thank her for the kind answers she had vouchsafed to Miss Matilda's inquiries as to the arrangement of a gentleman's dressing-room — answers which I must confess she had given in the wearied manner of the Scandinavian prophetess, —

"Leave me, leave me to repose!"

Household Words, XI.

And now I come to the love affair.

It seems that Miss Pole had a cousin, once or twice removed, who had offered to Miss Matey long ago. Now, this cousin lived four or five miles from Cranford on his own estate; but his property was not large enough to entitle him to rank higher than a yeoman; or rather, with something of the "pride which apes humility," he had refused to push himself on, as so many of his class had done, into the ranks of the squires. He would not allow himself to be called Thomas Holbrook, Esq.; he even sent back letters with this address, telling the postmistress at Cranford that his name was Mr. Thomas Holbrook, yeoman. He rejected all domestic innovations; he would have the house door stand open in summer, and shut in winter, without knocker or bell to summon a servant. The closed fist or the knob of the stick did this office for him, if he found the door locked. He despised every refinement which had not its root deep down in humanity. If people were not ill, he saw no necessity for moderating his voice. He spoke the dialect of the country in perfection, and constantly used it in conversation; although Miss Pole (who gave me these particulars) added, that he read aloud more beautifully and with more feeling than any one she had ever heard, except the late Rector.

"And how came Miss Matilda not to marry him?" asked I.

"Oh, I don't know. She was

willing enough, I think; but you know Cousin Thomas would not have been enough of a gentleman for the Rector, and Mrs. and Miss Jenkyns."

"Well! but they were not to marry him," said I, impatiently.

"No; but they did not like Miss Matey to marry below her rank. You know she was the Rector's daughter, and somehow they are related to Sir Peter Arley: Miss Jenkyns thought a deal of that."

"Poor Miss Matey!" said I.

"Nay, now, I don't know anything more than that he offered and was refused. Miss Matey might not like him — and Miss Jenkyns might never have said a word — it is only a guess of mine."

"Has she never seen him since?" I inquired.

"No, I think not. You see, Woodley, Cousin Thomas's house, lies half-way between Cranford and Misselton; and I know he made Misselton his market-town very soon after he had offered to Miss Matey; and I don't think he has been into Cranford above once or twice since — once, when I was walking with Miss Matey in High Street; and suddenly she darted from me, and went up Shire Lane. A few minutes after I was startled by meeting Cousin Thomas."

"How old is he?" I asked, after a pause of castle-building.

"He must be about seventy, I think, my dear," said Miss Pole, blowing up my castle, as if by gunpowder, into small fragments.

Very soon after — at least during my long visit to Miss Matilda — I had the opportunity of seeing Mr. Holbrook; seeing, too, his first encounter with his former love, after thirty or forty years' separation. I was helping to decide whether any of the new assortment of coloured silks which they had just received at the shop, would help to match a grey and black mousseline-de-laine that wanted a new breadth, when a tall, thin, Don Quixote-looking old man came into the shop for some woollen gloves. I had never seen the person, (who was rather striking) before, and I watched him rather attentively, while Miss Matey listened to the shopman. The stranger wore a blue coat with brass buttons, drab breeches, and gaiters, and drummed with his fingers on the counter until he was attended to. When he answered the shop-boy's question, "What can I have the pleasure of showing you to-day, Sir?" I saw Miss Matilda start, and then suddenly sit down; and instantly I guessed who it was. She had made some inquiry which had to be carried round to the other shopman.

"Miss Jenkyns wants the black sarcenet two-and-twopence the yard;" and Mr. Holbrook had caught the name, and was across the shop in two strides.

"Matey — Miss Matilda — Miss Jenkyns! God bless my soul! I should not have known you. How are you? how are you?" He kept shaking her hand in a way which

proved the warmth of his friendship; but he repeated so often, as if to himself, "I should not have known you!" that any sentimental romance which I might be inclined to build, was quite done away with by his manner.

However, he kept talking to us all the time we were in the shop; and then waving the shopman with the unpurchased gloves on one side, with "Another time, Sir! another time!" he walked home with us. I am happy to say my client, Miss Matilda, also left the shop in an equally bewildered state, not having purchased either green or red silk. Mr. Holbrook was evidently full with honest, loud-spoken joy at meeting his old love again; he touched on the changes that had taken place; he even spoke of Miss Jenkyns as "Your poor sister! Well, well! we have all our faults;" and bade us good-bye with many a hope that he should soon see Miss Matey again. She went straight to her room; and never came back till our early tea-time, when I thought she looked as if she had been crying.

A few days after, a note came from Mr. Holbrook, asking us — impartially asking both of us — in a formal, old-fashioned style, to spend a day at his house — a long June day — for it was June now. He named that he had also invited his cousin, Miss Pole; so that we might join in a fly, which could be put up at his house.

I expected Miss Matey to jump at this invitation; but, no! Miss

Pole and I had the greatest difficulty in persuading her to go. She thought it was improper; and was even half annoyed when we utterly ignored the idea of any impropriety in her going with two other ladies to see her old lover. Then came a more serious difficulty. She did not think Deborah would have liked her to go. This took us half a day's good hard talking to get over; but, at the first sentence of relenting, I seized the opportunity, and wrote and despatched an acceptance in her name — fixing day and hour, that all might be decided and done with.

The next morning she asked me if I would go down to the shop with her; and there, after much hesitation, we chose out three caps to be sent home and tried on, that the most becoming might be selected to take with us on Thursday.

She was in a state of silent agitation all the way to Woodley. She had evidently never been there before; and, although she little dreamt I knew anything of her early story, I could perceive she was in a tremor at the thought of seeing the place which might have been her home, and round which it is probable that many of her innocent girlish imaginations had clustered. It was a long drive there, through paved jolting lanes. Miss Matilda sat bolt upright, and looked wistfully out of the windows, as we drew near the end of our journey. The aspect of the country was quiet

and pastoral. Woodley stood among fields; and there was an old-fashioned garden, where roses and currant-bushes touched each other, and where the feathery asparagus formed a pretty back-ground to the pinks and gilly-flowers; there was no drive up to the door: we got out at a little gate, and walked up a straight box-edged path.

"My cousin might make a drive, I think," said Miss Pole, who was afraid of ear-ache, and had only her cap on.

"I think it is very pretty," said Miss Matey, with a soft plaintiveness in her voice, and almost in a whisper; for just then Mr. Holbrook appeared at the door, rubbing his hands in very effervescence of hospitality. He looked more like my idea of Don Quixote than ever, and yet the likeness was only external. His respectable housekeeper stood modestly at the door to bid us welcome; and, while she led the elder ladies up-stairs to a bedroom, I begged to look about the garden. My request evidently pleased the old gentleman; who took me all round the place, and showed me his six-and-twenty cows, named after the different letters of the alphabet. As we went along, he surprised me occasionally by repeating apt and beautiful quotations from the poets, ranging easily from Shakespeare and George Herbert to those of our own day. He did this as naturally as if he were thinking aloud, that their true and beautiful words

were the best expression he could find for what he was thinking or feeling. To be sure he called Byron "my lord Byrron," and pronounced the name of Goethe strictly in accordance with the English sound of the letters — "As Goëthe says, 'Ye ever-verdant palaces,'" &c. Altogether, I never met with a man, before or since, who had spent so long a life in a secluded and not impressive country, with ever-increasing delight in the daily and yearly change of season and beauty.

When he and I went in, we found that dinner was nearly ready in the kitchen, — for so I suppose the room ought to be called, as there were oak dressers and cupboards all round, all over by the side of the fire-place, and only a small Turkey carpet in the middle of the flag-floor. The room might have been easily made into a handsome dark-oak dining-parlour, by removing the oven, and a few other appurtenances of a kitchen, which were evidently never used; the real cooking-place being at some distance. The room in which we were expected to sit was a stiffly furnished, ugly apartment; but that in which we did sit was what Mr. Holbrook called the counting-house, when he paid his labourers their weekly wages, at a great desk near the door. The rest of the pretty sitting-room — looking into the orchard, and all covered over with dancing tree-shadows — was filled with books. They lay on the ground, they covered the walls,

they strewed the table. He was evidently half ashamed and half proud of his extravagance in this respect. They were of all kinds, — poetry, and wild weird tales prevailing. He evidently chose his books in accordance with his own tastes, not because such and such were classical, or established favourites.

“Ah!” he said, “we farmers ought not to have much time for reading; yet somehow one can’t help it.”

“What a pretty room!” said Miss Matey, *sotto voce*.

“What a pleasant place!” said I, aloud, almost simultaneously.

“Nay! if you like it,” replied he; “but can you sit on these great black leather three-cornered chairs? I like it better than the best parlour; but I thought ladies would take that for the smarter place.”

It was the smarter place; but, like most things, not at all pretty, or pleasant, or home-like; so, while we were at dinner, the servant-girl dusted and scrubbed the counting-house chairs, and we sate there all the rest of the day.

We had pudding before meat; and I thought Mr. Holbrook was going to make some apology for his old-fashioned ways, for he began,

“I don’t know whether you like new-fangled ways.”

“Oh! not at all!” said Miss Matey.

“No more do I,” said he.

“My housekeeper *will* have things in her new fashion; or else I tell her, that when I was a young man, we used to keep strictly to my father’s rule, ‘No broth, no ball; no ball, no beef;’ and always began dinner with broth. Then we had suet puddings, boiled in the broth with the beef; and then the meat itself. If we did not sup our broth, we had no ball, which we liked a deal better; and the beef came last of all, and only those had it who had done justice to the broth and the ball. Now folks begin with sweet things, and turn their dinners topsy-turvy.”

When the ducks and green pease came, we looked at each other in dismay; we had only two-pronged, black-handled forks. It is true, the steel was as bright as silver; but, what were we to do? Miss Matey picked up her peas, one by one, on the point of the prongs, much as Aminé ate her grains of rice after her previous feast with the Ghoul. Miss Pole sighed over her delicate young peas as she left them on one side of her plate untasted; for they *would* drop between the prongs. I looked at my host: the peas were going wholesale into his capacious mouth, shovelled up by his large round-ended knife. I saw, I imitated, I survived! My friends, in spite of my precedent, could not muster up courage enough to do an ungentle thing; and, if Mr. Holbrook had not been so heartily hungry, he would, probably, have seen

that the good pease went away almost untouched.

After dinner, a clay-pipe was brought in, and a spittoon; and, asking us to retire to another room, where he would soon join us if we disliked tobacco-smoke, he presented his pipe to Miss Matey, and requested her to fill the bowl. This was a compliment to a lady in his youth; but it was rather inappropriate to propose it as an honour to Miss Matey, who had been trained by her sister to hold smoking of every kind in utter abhorrence. But if it was a shock to her refinement, it was also a gratification to her feelings to be thus selected; so she daintily stuffed the strong tobacco into the pipe; and then we withdrew.

"It is very pleasant dining with a bachelor," said Miss Matey, softly, as we settled ourselves in the counting-house. "I only hope it is not improper; so many pleasant things are!"

"What a number of books he has!" said Miss Pole, looking round the room. "And how dusty they are!"

"I think it must be like one of the great Dr. Johnson's rooms," said Miss Matey. "What a superior man your cousin must be!"

"Yes!" said Miss Pole; "he's a great reader; but I am afraid he has got into very uncouth habits with living alone."

"Oh! uncouth is too hard a word. I should call him eccentric;

very clever people always are!" replied Miss Matey.

When Mr. Holbrook returned, he proposed a walk in the fields; but the two elder ladies were afraid of damp, and dirt; and had only very unbecoming calashes to put on over their caps; so they declined; and I was again his companion in a turn which he said he was obliged to take, to see after his niece. He strode along, either wholly forgetting my existence, or soothed into silence by his pipe — and yet it was not silence exactly. He walked before me, with a stooping gait, his hands clasped behind him; and, as some tree or cloud or glimpse at distant upland pastures, struck him, he quoted poetry to himself; saying it out loud in a grand sonorous voice, with just the emphasis that true feeling and appreciation give. We came upon an old cedar-tree, which stood at one end of the house;

"More black than ash-buds in the front
of March,
A cedar spread his dark-green layers of
shade."

"Capital term — 'layers!' Wonderful man!" I did not know whether he was speaking to me or not; but I put in an assenting "wonderful," although I knew nothing about it; just because I was tired of being forgotten, and of being consequently silent.

He turned sharp round. "Aye! you may say 'wonderful.' Why, when I saw the review of his poems in 'Blackwood,' I set off within an hour, and walked seven

miles to Misselton (for the horses were not in the way), and ordered them. Now, what colour are ash-buds in March?"

Is the man going mad? thought I. He is very like Don Quixote.

"What colour are they, I say?" repeated he, vehemently.

"I am sure I don't know, Sir," said I; with the meekness of ignorance.

"I knew you didn't. No more did I — an old fool that I am! till this young man comes and tells me. Black as ash-buds in March. And I've lived all my life in the country; more shame for me not to know. Black; they are jet-black, Madam." And he went off again, swinging along to the music of some rhyme he had got hold of.

When we came home, nothing would serve him but that he must read us the poems he had been speaking of; and Miss Pole encouraged him in his proposal, I thought, because she wished me to hear his beautiful reading, of which she had boasted; but she afterwards said it was because she had got to a difficult part of her crochet, and wanted to count her stitches without having to talk. Whatever he had proposed would have been right to Miss Matey; although she did fall sound asleep within five minutes after he began a long poem, called "Locksley Hall," and had a comfortable nap, unobserved, till he ended; when the cessation of his voice wakened her up, and she said, feeling that something was ex-

pected, and that Miss Pole was counting: —

"What a pretty book!"

"Pretty! Madam! it's beautiful! Pretty, indeed!"

"Oh yes! I meant beautiful!" said she, fluttered at his disapproval of her word. "It is so like that beautiful poem of Dr. Johnson's my sister used to read — I forget the name of it; what was it, my dear?" turning to me.

"Which do you mean, Ma'am? What was it about?"

"I don't remember what it was about, and I've quite forgotten what the name of it was; but it was written by Dr. Johnson, and was very beautiful, and very like what Mr. Holbrook has just been reading."

"I don't remember it," said he, reflectively, "but I don't know Dr. Johnson's poems well. I must read them."

As we were getting into the fly to return, I heard Mr. Holbrook say he should call on the ladies soon, and inquire how they got home; and this evidently pleased and fluttered Miss Matey at the time he said it; but after we had lost sight of the old house among the trees, her sentiments towards the master of it, were gradually absorbed into a distressing wonder as to whether Martha had broken her word, and seized on the opportunity of her mistress's absence to have a "follower." Martha looked good, and steady, and composed enough, as she came to help us out; she was always

careful of Miss Matey, and to-night she made use of this unlucky speech: —

“Eh! dear Ma’am, to think of your going out in an evening in such a thin shawl! It is no better than muslin. At your age, Ma’am, you should be careful.”

“My age!” said Miss Matey, almost speaking crossly, for her; for she was usually gentle. My age! Why, how old do you think I am, that you talk about my age?”

“Well, Ma’am! I should say you were not far short of sixty; but folks’ looks is often against them — and I’m sure I meant no harm.”

“Martha, I’m not yet fifty-two!” said Miss Matey, with grave emphasis; for probably the remembrance of her youth had come very vividly before her this day, and she was annoyed at finding that golden time so far away in the past.

But she never spoke of any former and more intimate acquaintance with Mr. Holbrook. She had probably met with so little sympathy in her early love, that she had shut it up close in her heart; and it was only by a sort of watching, which I could hardly avoid, since Miss Pole’s confidence, that I saw how faithful her poor heart had been in its sorrow and its silence.

She gave me some good reason for wearing her best cap every day, and sate near the window, in spite of her rheumatism, in

order to see, without being seen, down into the street.

He came. He put his open palms upon his knees, which were far apart, as he sate with his head bent down, whistling, after we had replied to his inquiries about our safe return. Suddenly, he jumped up.

“Well, Madam! have you any commands for Paris? I’m going there in a week or two.”

“To Paris!” we both exclaimed.

“Yes, Ma’am! I’ve never been there, and always had a wish to go; and I think if I don’t go soon, I mayn’t go at all; so as soon as the hay is got in I shall go, before harvest-time.”

We were so much astonished, that we had no commissions.

Just as he was going out of the room, he turned back, with his favourite exclamation:

“God bless my soul, Madam! but I nearly forgot half my errand. Here are the poems for you, you admired so much the other evening at my house.” He tugged away at a parcel in his coat-pocket. “Good-bye, Miss,” said he; “good-bye, Matey! take care of yourself.” And he was gone. But he had given her a book, and he had called her Matey, just as he used to do thirty years ago.

“I wish he would not go to Paris,” said Miss Matilda, anxiously. “I don’t believe frogs will agree with him; he used to be very careful what he ate, which was curious in so strong-looking a young man.”

Soon after this I took my leave, giving many an injunction to Martha to look after her Mistress, and to let me know if she thought that Miss Matilda was not so well; in which case I would volunteer a visit to my old friend, without noticing Martha's intelligence to her.

Accordingly I received a line or two from Martha every now and then; and, about November, I had a note to say her Mistress was "very low and sadly off her food;" and the account made me so uneasy, that, although Martha did not decidedly summon me, I packed up my things and went.

I received a warm welcome, in spite of the little flurry produced by my impromptu visit, for I had only been able to give a day's notice. Miss Matilda looked miserably ill; and I prepared to comfort and cosset her.

I went down to have a private talk with Martha.

"How long has your Mistress been so poorly?" I asked, as I stood by the kitchen fire.

"Well! I think it's better than a fortnight; it is, I know: it was one Tuesday after Miss Pole had been that she went into this moping way. I thought she was tired, and it would go off with a night's rest; but, no! she has gone on and on ever since, till I thought it my duty to write to you, Ma'am."

"You did quite right, Martha. It is a comfort to think she has so faithful a servant about her. And

I hope you find your place comfortable?"

"Well, Ma'am, missus is very kind, and there's plenty to eat and drink, and no more work but what I can do easily, — but" — Martha hesitated.

"But what, Martha?"

"Why, it seems so hard of missus not to let me have any followers; there's such lots of young fellows in the town; and many a one has as much as offered to keep company with me; and I may never be in such a likely place again, and it's like wasting an opportunity. Many a girl as I know would have 'em unbeknownst to missus; but I've given my word, and I'll stick to it; or else this is just the house for missus never to be the wiser if they did come: and it's such a capable kitchen — there's such good dark corners in it — I'd be bound to hide any one. I counted up last Sunday night — for I'll not deny I was crying because I had to shut the door in Jem Hearn's face; and he's a steady young man, fit for any girl; only I had given missus my word." Martha was all but crying again; and I had little comfort to give her, for I knew, from old experience, of the horror with which both the Miss Jenkynses looked upon "followers;" and in Miss Matey's present nervous state this dread was not likely to be lessened.

I went to see Miss Pole the next day, and took her completely by

surprise; for she had not been to see Miss Matilda for two days.

"And now I must go back with you, my dear, for I promised to let her know how Thomas Holbrook went on; and I'm sorry to say his housekeeper has sent me word to-day that he hasn't long to live. Poor Thomas! That journey to Paris was quite too much for him. His housekeeper says he has hardly ever been round his fields since; but just sits with his hands on his knees in the counting-house, not reading or anything, but only saying, what a wonderful city Paris was! Paris has much to answer for, if it's killed my cousin Thomas, for a better man never lived."

"Does Miss Matilda know of his illness?" asked I; — a new light as to the cause of her indisposition dawning upon me. — "Dear! to be sure, yes! Has not she told you? I let her know a fortnight ago, or more, when first I heard of it. How odd, she shouldn't have told you!"

Not at all, I thought; but I did not say anything. I felt almost guilty of having spied too curiously into that tender heart, and I was not going to speak of its secrets, — hidden, Miss Matey believed, from all the world. I ushered Miss Pole into Miss Matilda's little drawing-room; and then left them alone. But I was not surprised when Martha came to my bedroom door, to ask me to go down to dinner alone, for that missus had one of her bad headaches. She came into the drawing-room

at tea-time; but it was evidently an effort to her; and, as if to make up for some reproachful feeling against her late sister, Miss Jenkyns, which had been troubling her all afternoon, and for which she now felt penitent, she kept telling me how good and how clever Deborah was in her youth; how she used to settle what gowns they were to wear at all the parties (faint, ghostly ideas of dim parties far away in the distance, when Miss Matey and Miss Pole were young! — and how Deborah and her mother had started the benefit society for the poor, and taught girls cooking and plain sewing; and how Deborah had once danced with a lord; and how she used to visit at Sir Peter Arley's, and try to remodel the quiet rectory establishment on the plans of Arley Hall, where they kept thirty servants; and how she had nursed Miss Matey through a long, long illness, of which I had never heard before, but which I now dated in my own mind as following the dismissal of the suit of Mr. Holbrook. So we talked softly and quietly of old times, through the long November evening.

The next day Miss Pole brought us word that Mr. Holbrook was dead. Miss Matey heard the news in silence; in fact, from the account on the previous day, it was only what we had to expect. Miss Pole kept calling upon us for some expression of regret, by asking if it was not sad that he was gone; and saying,

"To think of that pleasant day last June, when he seemed so well! And he might have lived this dozen years if he had not gone to that wicked Paris, where they are always having Revolutions."

She paused for some demonstration on our part. I saw Miss Matey could not speak, she was trembling so nervously; so I said what I really felt: and after a call of some duration — all the time of which I have no doubt Miss Pole thought Miss Matey received the news very calmly — our visitor took her leave. But the effort at self-control Miss Matey had made to conceal her feelings — a concealment she practised even with me, for she has never alluded to Mr. Holbrook again, although the book he gave her lies with her Bible on the little table by her bedside; she did not think I heard her when she asked the little milliner of Cranford to make her caps something like the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson's, or that I noticed the reply —

"But she wears widows' caps, Ma'am?"

"Oh! I only meant something in that style; not widows', of course, but rather like Mrs. Jamieson's."

This effort at concealment was the beginning of the tremulous motion of head and hands which I have seen ever since in Miss Matey.

The evening of the day on which we heard of Mr. Holbrook's death, Miss Matilda was very si-

lent and thoughtful; after prayers she called Martha back, and then she stood uncertain what to say.

"Martha!" she said at last; "you are young," — and then she made so long a pause that Martha, to remind her of her half-finished sentence, dropped a courtesy, and said: —

"Yes, please, Ma'am; two-and-twenty last third of October, please, Ma'am."

"And perhaps, Martha, you may sometime meet with a young man you like, and who likes you. I did say you were not to have followers; but if you meet with such a young man, and tell me, and I find he is respectable, I have no objection to his coming to see you once a week. God forbid!" said she in a low voice, "that I should grieve any young hearts." She spoke as if she were providing for some distant contingency, and was rather startled when Martha made her ready eager answer: —

"Please, Ma'am, there's Jim Hearn, and he's a joiner, making three-and-sixpence a-day, and six foot one in his stocking-feet, please Ma'am; and if you'll ask about him to-morrow-morning, every one will give him a character for steadiness; and he'll be glad enough to come to-morrow night, I'll be bound."

Though Miss Matey was startled, she submitted to Fate and Love.

CHIPS.

"MY UNCLE" AND "MY AUNT."

"SIR, — It is a curious fact, and one which I do not see mentioned at page 135 upon that remarkable and excellent individual 'My Uncle,' that in France the same person is familiarly known as My Aunt; and that when a gentleman in Paris has pledged his watch, in order to raise a little ready cash for the expenses of the Carnival, to the question — 'Où est votre montre?' (Where is your watch?) he will reply, 'Elle est chez ma Tante' (It is at my Aunt's). I remain

"Un des Neveux de ma Tante
"et de Mon Oncle."

ANECDOTES OF MONKEYS.

DURING a short stay on the Essequibo, a little monkey of the Jackowai Ris tribe, in return for some slight attention I had shown him, permitted me so far to gain his favour and confidence, that he was seldom away from my person; indeed, he treated me like one mentioned by a distinguished traveller, which every morning seized on a pig belonging to a mission on the Orinoco, and rode on its back during the whole day, while it wandered about the savannahs in search of food. Nothing pleased him better than to perch on my shoulder, when he would encircle my neck with his long hairy tail, and accompany me in all my rambles. His tail formed

a no very agreeable neckcloth, with the thermometer above one hundred degrees; but he seemed so disappointed when I refused to carry him, that it was impossible to leave him behind. In appearance he was particularly engaging — squirrel-like in form — with a light brown coat slightly tinged with yellow, and arms and legs of a reddish cast — pleasingly contrasting with a pale face, and small black muzzle; the expressive and merry twinkle of his sparkling black eye betokened fun, roguery, and intelligence. The Jackowai Ris are a fierce race, and approach the carnivora in their habits and dispositions. One reason of our intimacy was the sameness of our pursuits — both being entomologists; but he was a far more indefatigable insect-hunter than myself. He would sit motionless for hours among the branches of a flowering shrub or tree, the resort of bees and butterflies, and suddenly seize them when they little expected danger. Timid in the presence of strangers, he would usually fly to the branches of a neighbouring tree at their approach, uttering a plaintive cry, more resembling a bird than an animal. He was apt to be troublesome, even to me, unless I found him some amusement; this fortunately was not difficult; for his whole attention was soon engrossed by a flower, or by a leaf from my note-book, which he would industriously pull to pieces, and throw on the surface of the water, earnestly watching the fragments

with his quick black eye, as they glided away.

At other times, when sitting on my shoulder, he was an incessant plague, twitching the hair from my head by twos and threes, filling my ears with fragments of plants and other rubbish, and taking a malicious pleasure in holding on by those members when the boat lurched, and he was in danger of falling. I think it was one of the same family that Humboldt found capable of recognising as resemblances of their originals, even uncoloured zoological drawings; and would stretch out its hand to endeavour to capture the bees and grass-hoppers. I was unable to test the sagacity of my little comrade, as the only accessible work with engravings was a copy of Schomburgk's "Fishes of Guiana;" and, when I showed him the plates, he manifested no signs of a knowledge of any of his finny compatriots; never, perhaps, having seen them. He was dreadfully afraid of getting himself wet, particularly his hands and feet; in this respect showing a very different disposition to a large long-haired black monkey, belonging to a family settled a short distance from our residence.

This animal — on object of the greatest terror to the little Jackowinki, from his having caught him one day and ducked him in the river — was one of the most tractable and docile I ever remember having met. He was in the habit of accompanying his master in all his fishing and shooting expedi-

tions, taking his allotted seat in the canoe, and plying his small paddle for hours together with the utmost gravity and composure; all the while keeping excellent time, and being never "out of stroke." Like his companions, he would now and then dip the handle of his paddle in the water, to destroy the squeaking grate of the dry surface, and again would lean over the side and wash his hands. His domestic habits were perfectly human. The first thing every morning he cleansed his teeth, by taking a mouthful of water, and using his finger as a tooth-brush; like the other members of the family, whom he also imitated in their daily bath in the river. Perhaps one at least of these peculiarities was not entirely imitative, as a credible authority (Captain Stedman, in his "Narrative of an Expedition to Surinam") assures us that he once saw a monkey at the water's edge, rinsing his mouth, and appearing to clean his teeth with his fingers.

As for my little friend, I intended to bring him home; but the day before my departure he suddenly decamped. We were taking our usual trip up the creek, and I was just thinking of returning, when, on rounding a sharp bend in the tortuous channel, I perceived two jackowinkis sitting on a branch about twenty yards distant, as yet unaware of our vicinity, and from their chattering and grimaces seemingly engaged in some matrimonial squabble. Anxious to obtain a specimen for stuffing, I

fired at one, which proved to be the male, who dropped to the ground.

When he saw his brother fall, he seemed instantly to understand that I was a murderer. He took immediate revenge. He sprang to my shoulder, tore a handful of hair from my head, and swiftly clambered away among the overhanging branches. When I recovered from surprise at this unexpected attack, he had paused in his flight; and, with his face turned towards me, was grinning, showing his sharp little teeth, and throwing down glances of fierceness and hate. In another instant he was pursuing the female, whose plaintive twitterings were distinctly audible, as she scampered away among the trees. In the course of time, he no doubt managed to console the widow; and, free from all shackles and restraints, is probably, at this moment, quietly enjoying a married life in his native woods.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

A MASKED BALL.

It is a bitterly cold night, and the snow which has been for three days tumbling down upon the roofs and pavements of Vienna, tumbles down upon us still. The theatres, which get through their performances by half-past nine, are closed already; and there is a lull now in the muffled streets. I mean to go out as a muffled man,

and use the ticket I have bought for a Masked Ball at the palace. The sale of tickets for such balls, which take place now and then during the winter, raises enormous sums, which are applied to charitable purposes, so that the luxury of the rich is made to minister, in this case, also to the comfort of the poor.

Here I stand ankle-deep in snow, and look up at the palace; all the windows on the first story are being lighted up, and cold gentlemen converging towards the door from all parts, are the members of Strauss's band. And now lights have begun to flash about the streets, and masks are beginning to arrive. Splendid carriages of the nobility; and positively some of the Imperial family do not disdain to be among the first arrivals! The beau from the suburbs, in a light fiacre. Actresses and officers in their broughams. Sledges from the country, drawn by merry little horses, frisking through the snow, and jingling bells over their harness. A chaos of lights, a coachman, and the long poles of sedan chairs in the way of a chaos of legs, hats, shoulders, coach-tops, and everything else, powdered with snow that tumbles silently and steadily upon the scene of riot. A crush of revellers upon the staircase. Half-past eleven; all the most important people having now entered — except myself — it is quite time for me to follow to the ball-room.

A vast room. Think of the Great Exhibition, if you want a

notion of it; and take off a discount for exaggeration. Walk to the end of this room, and a door opens into another ball-room, almost twice as large. In each of these great halls, there are raised orchestras, in which the bands are stationed; and when one band ceases playing, another is prepared immediately to begin. Galleries, to which you ascend by flights of stairs at each end, run round both the rooms; and into these galleries open innumerable ice and supper-rooms, passagers, and out-of-the-way cells, wherein you may lose yourself, but not your company. Masks are to be found sitting in every corner; wherever a mask is, there is mischief.

You see nothing vulgar, no rude costume, no monstrous noses, no absurd pairs of spectacles, or woolly wigs. You hear no boisterous shouts of mirth; beautiful music reigns incessantly supreme over all other sounds. Only the ladies are disguised; their faces are hidden behind elegant little black silk masks, and they vie with each other in the costliness and beauty of their costumes and dominoes. The men are all in simple evening dress; they walk about, defenceless game, and yield sport in abundance to the dames and damsels. Most of the ministers are here — grave, steady gentlemen, with bald heads or gray hair. Each of them is surrounded by a swarm of masks — princesses, perhaps — milliners, perhaps — and some of them are

evidently making wry mouths at what they are obliged to hear. This is the time for home truths. The ladies at a masked ball make good use of their disguise, and scatter about their wholesome mischief abundantly.

A vision in black and gold beckons to me. I place myself at her disposal. "You are an Englishman," the vision says; "I know you." "How, Madam?" "By your awkwardness." "Are Britons awkward?" "Yes, and wearisome. Go, you are not amusing. Take care of your gloves; they are so large that I fear they will fall off." The vision laughs at me and vanishes. I have a secret or two which I don't mean to print. I did think that those mysteries were locked up in my bosom. If you ever happen to be at Vienna, with some secrets in your keeping, and desire to know whether you hold them safe, go to a Masked Ball. Mocking voices, behind black silk masks, will very much surprise you with some samples of the penetration proper to a sex which seems, in Vienna, to be made up of Blue Beard wives. Twenty ladies honour me with minute details of the contents of one apartment in my mind, which I had considered quite a patent safe, with a fastening like that of the box in the talisman of Oromanes.

The night wears on; at three o'clock the instrumental music ceases, but the music of the mischievous and merry tattlers still continues to be ringing in all ears, and making them to tingle. Every

man is destined to go home abundantly informed and criticised upon the subject of his foibles. Until six o'clock, supping, and taking tea and coffee, will continue, and the relish for amusement will be as keen as ever. Nobody is dancing — nobody has danced; that is no part of the business. At length, the multitude has dwindled down to a few stragglers; the remainder of the cloaks, and coats, and wrappers, are brought out and scattered, as so many hints to their possessors, in the middle of the great room. We immediately dive and scramble for them. In another hour, the lights are put out; all is over, and I travel home over the snow.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

NOTHING in the world equals the quiet earnest, unconscious manner in which a German commits an absurdity. An Englishman, when he makes himself ridiculous, has generally some uneasy perception of the fact; a German never has. Solemn unsuspecting simplicity is the mark of his race. Even his vanity is grave; and a German curls his moustache, or twists himself into the shape of a Z to see how his coat sits behind, with a sober unsmiling look, hard to imagine. He makes love and reads tragedy both with the same face.

I saw re-produced, in Household Words, a little while ago, some of the strange advertisements which our stoical friends send by the handful to their news-

papers. Let me send a few more, translated faithfully from papers that have passed through my hands here in Vienna. Advertisements for wives and husbands are very numerous and varied. Their nature is, however, tolerably well known. I shall content myself with dropping one or two, as we pass on to the more interesting details of the processes of courtship through the advertising columns. Here is one which, doubtless, was well calculated to touch the heart of *gazelles* not indisposed to wed a market-gardener, who cultivated tobacco, for which he wanted a market:

“A THIRTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD young man, of studious disposition, and a ministerial *employé*, wishes to meet with a person of ripe years, who has several thousand florins at her own disposal. She will live a life free from care in any other respect than keeping a Tobacconist's shop.”

F. N. N., prompt to calm any apprehensions on the score of bigamy, advertises that he, “A SINGLE MAN, and an Imperial-Royal Hungarian Officer of State, wishes to marry a beautiful and accomplished lady with eight thousand florins.”

Fearing, apparently, a heavy pull on his exchequer, he requests the beautiful heiresses, applying for his hand, to pay the postage of their letters.

“INVITATION TO WEDLOCK. A widower of *sixty* years old, of a firm yet pleasant disposition,

healthy and strong in body, who has served in the Imperial army and received a good-service pension of four guineas yearly," (I translate also the money,) "possessing, moreover, a small trade, and being the father of a little eleven-year-old daughter, wishes, without farther hesitation, to marry. Hereupon well-reflecting persons are to address * * * et cetera.

Reflection might suggest the imprudence of marrying an old man, even with four guineas a year of independent property; but the advertiser, evidently looking for a rush of ladies after so desirable a husband, answers their impatience before-hand by appending to the offer of himself "*N. B. — A Railway all the way.*"

I will pass over the angry advertisements fired at each other by gentlemen who quarrel, and about all manner of other things with which we in England are not at all familiar in advertising columns. Here is an odd one: —

"THAT THICK OLD GENTLEMAN, with the bald head and spectacles, who on Monday, the 27th inst., made such a noise in the Court Theatre, by laughing loudly during the performance, and subsequently groaning and crying, to the great disturbance of other people, is begged to express his feelings more quietly for the future:"

Little matters of this kind, too, let us pass over, and proceed to some specimens of courtship by

advertisement. Young ladies, hereabouts, must really be newspaper readers, if they would not miss knowing when an offer may be made, or a love letter addressed to them. In order to ensure a limit to the number of my specimens, I will judiciously change the initials, and give you neither more nor less than an *abécédaire* of manifest affection.

A. "TO EMILIE. Sad the heart! Worn out. A thousand thanks for relief. Much anxiety about Julia * * *! Loves she me?"

"MADEMOISELLE LEOPOLDINE CŒUR D'ANGE is most humbly prayed to send a letter for her slave B. to the post office."

Here would have been an oversight, if Miss D. had not read her paper.

"TO MARRY, OR NOT TO MARRY? That is the momentous question from C. to D."

D., however — Deborah, doubtless — sees the question popped, and puts an advertisement into the next morning's paper.

"WHEN OR WHERE? From to D. to C."

By a later advertisement we are told, that the answer to "When or where?" has been left for D., at the post office. D., doubtless, is changed to C. by this time.

E. says, "To Miss P. von S. I will do whatever you wish, if you will only issue your commands from a little nearer."

He objects to letters, and desires an interview. F., on the other hand, is thankful for a letter, as he ought to be.

"HIGH-BORN AND GRACIOUS DAME, I have just received your honoured letter of this month, and already fully considered your invitation. I was touched to the heart at the delay of your letter. Cruel Fate, cruel post office! Well, too well, do I understand such painful impediments to our bliss! Deep in my heart grow the thanks for your remembrance. I have the greatest anxiety to see you; till when, think of me sometimes."

"To G. I suffer much, both physically and morally. Why care for the rain or the full omnibus? Did I not wait for you in the green-wood, and is not Sunday the only day of my freedom? H."

"TO THE LADY who ought to be dressed in white or blue.

'I am bound in your bands,
And can send by no hands.'

Mary Stuart.

Thirteen Sundays have been days without a sun! Thirteen hopes in half-past twelve have been lost! Still salt keeps the meat fresh, and desire keeps love young! Sheltered are my happy hopes, like 'flowers gathered by a child.' The flower returns to dust. But winter brings *me* the hope of spring." She therefore signs herself J.

J. sportively asks for the address of his pet, who, perhaps, is on a visit to Vienna.

"TO THE LITTLE PUSS, MIMI. Where do you mew now? Miou."

K., from Petruchio's Katherine, perhaps, to a despondent advertiser.

"To L. As for your despair I saw nothing of it, and don't mean to write to you. It is all stuff. K."

"REQUEST WORTHY OF REMARK. M. would be satisfied to associate himself with a young maiden or widow, and thus commence an acquaintance which might ripen into matrimony. Also, he wants a partner in his business, with from one hundred and fifty pounds to two hundred pounds."

M. is evidently getting a taste for society, or else he is sordid, like N., "AN EDUCATED LADY," who bluntly advertises her "desire to buy a little business by means of marrying the proprietor."

"To O. I was there. Sorry I saw nobody. Look to the opposite window this afternoon. P."

"Q. UNFORGIVEN, canst thou remain so long? Well, then, let it be mine to say the godlike word — I pardon, lest you should be gone. I got your two letters. Anything but leaving me! My trust is in your truth. This believe. Shall your maiden write without embarrassment? This say soon to R. To morrow I return *there*, alas!"

"To S. Oh, you little silly thing! What am I to do with Johanna's reticule? T."

"TO THE TWENTY-YEAR-OLD BLONDE young lady. I am arrived. Will come next week, at the same time to the same place. V."

V. is assured by a lady signing herself "A Female Cigar-holder," "that he need be under no uneasiness as to the success of his suit."

"BELOVED W. To-day is a terrible thought for me! Every gleam of sunshine falls on my heart like joys. Every cloud hangs over it like sorrow. Wilt thou come? If wet, scruple not to take a hackney-coach. I will pay."

The lover who spontaneously offers to pay for a hackney-coach, should be transformed into a husband without loss of time. "Beloved W." has, doubtless, hurried to become beloved wife, that is to say, if W. was wise.

"YOUNG WOMAN, I await your letter. X."

X. is extremely cross, one can perceive. Not so, however, Y.

"TO THE SMILING LADY, who, upon the loveliest day in summer, and of my life, drove to Grätz.

"In the depths of my soul is your image graven. Truth and I know each other. How lovely art thou! All the hopes of my life are broken down if I cannot see you at eleven o'clock, on the 17th of September. You were the sunshine of my days. Oh! why are you clouded!

'Blooms still no flower me to joy?'

"Y."

These are all literal translations

of advertisements, and so is this concluding one from Z., that crooked dog, who, being left to walk last, sneers at his company.

"NOT TO BE OVERLOOKED. When I wish to write cheaply to any one, I just put in an advertisement. It only costs four florins — a mere nothing. Z."

IRISH BALLAD SINGERS AND IRISH STREET BALLADS.

THIS is Fair-day in our Irish market-town. On every road, pour in flocks of sheep, droves of cattle (many of them of the old country breed, small and rough), and pigs; the latter for the most part coming singly, with hay-rope to jerking hind-leg. At every convenient brook or hedge side, country girls don the shoes and stockings they have been carrying so far in a bundle: partly for economy's sake, partly because they can walk with more ease barefoot; mainly, in order that they may enter the fair with undimmed lustre of black, and spotless white or blue. At an outskirt of the town spreads the "Fair-Green," bordered with hovels; its expanse of mire thickly trodden with hoof and brogue — men shouting, swearing, bargaining, where the moistened penny smites and re-smites the rugged palm; beasts lowing, bleating, bellowing, braying, neighing, and squeaking. Horses with ribbon

on neck dash recklessly to and fro; multitudinous horns threaten, parried and punished by innumerable sticks. Who keep all those asses? Are they never curried? In good sooth they *are* ill-used. There are few whiskey-tents, but this is because people prefer to drink elsewhere; for many have "broke their medal" — in other words, forgotten Father Mathew — long ago.

Down the street, it is all a moving crush of carts, beasts, potatoes (not quite extinct yet), corn-sacks, and human beings. There are men in blue coats, flat cloth caps, old brown hats; matrons, in blue cloaks, red shawls, a cloak or two of the old-fashioned red cloth, white caps, white kerchiefs on head, red kerchiefs; maidens, with hair of brown or sable Spanish gloss, or, more ambitious, in bonnets with fluttering ribbons and flowered shawls. Yet these, too, found their last mirror, perhaps in Pie's Pool there above; coming thence no longer barefoot.

At all corners and points of vantage, apples are offered energetically to the public; at a few, cakes and "sweet-rock." Elevated on carts without horses, the auctioneers of old clothes, and the Cheap Johns of new apparel, make their appeals to the crowd, and their apparently ferocious verbal attacks upon each other. Auctioneer, who is licensed and sells in regular mode to the highest bidder, alludes, somewhat haughtily, to the flimsiness of slop

goods: Cheap John, a stentorian and brazen outlaw, declares that none of *his* customers can say, "Be merciful to the man that wore this last! — I wonder what he died of!" and kindling with the sympathy of his audience, shoots forth a quite surprising volley of humour and wit; rich, ready, genuine, and making advantage of passing occurrences. Then, of a sudden, he slides into business again — "I'll not have even one-and-eight, one-and-seven — (Don't stop me, Ma'am), one-and-six, seventeen, sixteen, fifteen!" — and at last sells the new fancy vest, which he has tried on himself ever so often, at nine-pence; or, perhaps, cannot sell it after all, and, flinging it by, once more unfolds the three yards and a half and a bit of suspiciously-measured linen, which he whacks with well-managed wand to prove its soundness.

A more quiet company of merchants — amongst whom, years ago, Cheap John the First arose like a red revolutionist — continue to pitch their tents hard by. The *Stannens* (standings) are conveniently ranged over the gutter on each side of the street, with roofs of patched canvas, sack-cloth, or motley counterpane, stretched on rickety poles, or rounded with osiers; whereunder are spread the dazzling treasures of cheap cutlery and jewellery; distorting mirrors in red frames; round pewter-cased ditto capable of being propped up and folded artfully; *gallowses*

(i. e. suspenders), and broadbelts of coloured web — deemed wholesome wear by country youths; little blue and yellow covered song-books; Lives of Saints, mixed with spelling-books and *Reed-a-ma-daisies* (Reading-made-easys); and, in a corner, three or four second-hand volumes — perhaps one of Urquhart's "Rabelais," Dublin edition, and two of "The Justice of the Peace, published in 1823;" which latter the stannen'-keeper recommends to your attention as "an entertaining romance;" and, on being, with some trouble, undeceived on this point, says he's no scholar (meaning that he can't read), but that's what he bought it for.

At our elbow, a ballad-singer, a young woman in old plaid cloak and very old straw bonnet, strikes up, with a sweet Connaught lisp, and slightly nasal twang, "The Sorrowful Lamentation of Patrick Donohue" — with the words "Come all you tender Christians!" — and soon summons around her a ring of listeners. She will sing *da capo* as long as the ballad appears to draw attention and custom, and then she will change it or move off to another part of the fair.

The hour of melody seems to have struck; for, not far away we discover a second circle united by Orphean attraction. And here our curiosity is raised by the comment of a man who seems to be tearing himself away from the influence. The best ballad-singer this, he declares, that he has heard

these twenty years! To which another, assenting, says, "Introth, it's worth a ha'penny to hear him go over it, let alone the paper." The minstrel is found to be a tall, sad, stooping man, about thirty-five; his song, to the very favourite tune of "Youghall Harbour," is about two faithful lovers; his vocal excellence consists in that he twirls every word several times round his tongue, wrapt in the notes of a soft, husky, tremulous voice. In this style of gracing — which is considered highly artistic, and for which, I believe, "humouring" is the country phrase — the words are delivered somewhat as follows:

That is to say:

This pay-air discoo-ooeyoor-ercèd with
sich foo-oocy-oorce o' ray-ayizin,
Ther may-aynin they ay-apee-ayx-
esprayss'd so-ho-o-o cleerrrr,
That fau-hor to lae—ssen too-oo ther caw-
aw-he-on-vairsay-ay-ashin,
My ehe-ee-in-clinay-aheeay-ashin was
for too-oo-hoo-hoo draw-aw-
haw-ee-aw-a neerrrrr.

That is to say:

This pair discoursèd with such force of
raysoning,
Their meaning they expressed so clear,
That for to listen to their conversation,
My inclination was for to draw near.

Urging our slow way through the crowd, we come within earshot of a shriller strain, which proceeds from two female vocalists, standing face to face, and yelling down one another's throats. Agrarian politics, this time, and not of the most wholesome sort! That country lout — who tenders his copper with swaggering bash-

fulness, and, for careful preservation of the ballad, rolls it up into a wisp between his hands, and so thrusts it into his pocket — lout as he is, has, not improbably, enough of musical ear and voice to enable him to revive the symphony and song of these strange damsels, by his winter fireside, and at subsequent wakes and gatherings; sprinkling into wild hearts the ignorance and foolishness — if it be no worse — of some poor conceited creature who perhaps bribed the printer with a few pence to exalt his trash into type.

Does that fine *gendarmerie* of ours, the constabulary, never intermeddle with crime in its rarefied or gaseous form of song? Seldom; scarcely ever, beyond desiring the offender to “move on,” which the offender does — as far as round the corner of the next lane. Notwithstanding all we hear about penal laws, the liberty of the subject is sacredly, almost superstitiously, respected in Ireland. Listen for a moment to that vender of china-cement and polishing paste, who, rubbing his whitening and quicksilver with his palm on the edges of a roll of pence, invites the crowd to turn their iron spoons into silver, and their saucepans into shaving-mirrors: adding, that the composition is admirable for cleaning up a firelock — “and if yiz wuz only to take it out wanst a year to shoot an agent wid, yiz oughtn’t to grudge the price I’m axin’, — ha’pence a-piece, still on, or six

for tuppence!” Of course this is mere fun; but we must confess, too, that it is freedom of speech.*

The muster of ballad-singers, to-day, is above the average; for, see, here is another! A little elderly man, wearing a very large and extremely elderly hat — his warehouse. He accompanies his comic song with a fiddle, upon which he leans one of his red weazen cheeks, watching with twinkling black eyes the movements of his left hand on the strings. His fiddle is cheap-looking and cracked, and his bow is mended with packthread. When the harsh chords cease, and he lowers the instrument slowly from his chin, you observe that what seemed to be a continuous self-satisfied smile is, in reality, the effect of a dint or muscular contraction near his mouth; and that his expression of countenance is most doleful. He stands helplessly with the fiddle under one arm, and the sheaf of papers in his hands. Let us buy one of him; and then go home, and look over a certain sheaf of our own gathering, of publications in the same humble, but not all unimportant, department of literature.

Here is our bundle — some ten dozen of the ordinary street ballads of Ireland; comprising, we have reason to think, specimens of almost every sort at present in vogue in the rural districts; that is to say, all Ireland, except two or three of the largest towns with

* Heard by the writer as stated.

their immediate neighbourhoods, which have local and *towny* ballads of their own. They are, of course, "printed on gray paper with coarse type," headed with most incompatible woodcuts, and filled with instances of every kind of typographical error; from mis-stopping and mis-spelling to omissions of words, lines, and half-stanzas; so that, while intended for the perusal of the humblest, they often require (as I once heard a girl complain) "a very good scholar to make them out."

Nearly one-half of the whole number owe their inspiration to Cupid — a personage not unfrequently mentioned therein by name, and conducting about eighty per cent. of his followers to the happiest conclusion. In this class of songs, two things are observable, as truly reflecting the character of the people: first, lawful wedlock is uniformly the aim and end: second, elopements are very usual, and are considered not in the least objectionable. Parents are habitually described as the natural enemies of true lovers; and, as such, it is held not only allowable, but highly praiseworthy, to revile, deceive, and even directly to rob them. Yet the romantic or love-in-a-cottage principle which prevails among the Romeos and Juliets of polite fiction has no parallel here, for care is always taken to provide one or other of the amorous couple with "ample means," and oftentimes the exact amount of the

dowry is impressively mentioned. Instances of ladies of fortune falling in love with young men of the humblest rank, are (in the ballad world) extremely frequent; sailors and servants, or "*labouring-boys*," appearing to be the most liable to such good fortune. On the other hand, it sometimes happens, but not nearly so often, that a gentleman is found laying his affection and property at the feet of a lowly maiden. The ladies, in truth, are by much the bolder wooers; witness the oldest and most popular ballad in our collection, which, in the present copy, commences thus:

Rise up, William O'Reilly, and come along
with me;

I mean for to go with you, and leave this
country; *

I'll leave my father's dwelling, his money
and fine lawn, **

So away goes William O'Reilly, and his
dear Mourneen Bawn.

This ballad had its rise in an affair that happened in the north-west of Ireland about sixty-five years ago. William O'Reilly, or Willy Reilly, a young Catholic farmer, was tried at Sligo for the abduction of Miss Folliott, daughter of a gentleman of property; but the young lady deposed that she had eloped with Willy of her own free will, and he was thereupon triumphantly acquitted. The fact of the Folliotts being aristocrats and of high Orange politics, invested the occurrence with a strong party

* Pronounced *counteree*.

** A misprint for "land," which is pronounced *lawn* in the North.

interest; which, combined with the romantic circumstances of the case, gave the ballad an extensive popularity, which it still retains. All over Ulster, at least, Willy Reilly is a household word; and the name — sometimes in the form of Reilly, sometimes of O'Reilly — has become a stock name of the heroes of the ballad-makers.

For another instance, less authorised by history, of this leap-year style of courtship, take "The Admired Love-Song of William and Eliza, of Lough-Erin Shore." William becomes servant to "a lady of honour," who falls in love with him, and brings him, first to Dublin, and thence to London.

For three months in great consolation
[says William]

This lady she did me adore,
Saying, my Willy, do not be uneasy
For leaving Lough-Erin shore.

Dear Willie, you'll roll in great splendour,
With lords, dukes, and earls of fame;
You'll correspond with these nobles,
And you shall be equal the same.

In conclusion, William; who at first really did appear somewhat uneasy, despite the splendour promised him,

Is wed to a great English lady,
The truth unto you I'll explore;
He hopes to roll in great splendour
Once more on Lough-Erin shore.

William, by the way, is, out of sight, the most popular, lyrically, of Christian names.

The following damsel is no less demonstrative than the one just disposed of:

It is of a nobleman's daughter,
So comely and handsome to hear,
Her father possessed of great fortune,
Full thirty-five thousand a year;
He had but one only daughter,
Caroline is her name, we are told.
One day, from her drawing-room window,
She admired a young sailor so bold.

His cheeks they appeared like two roses,
His hair was as black as the jet,
Young Caroline watch'd his departure,
Walked round, and young William she met;

She said, "I'm a nobleman's daughter,
Possessed of ten thousand in gold;
I'll forsake both my father and mother,
And wed my young sailor bold."

Young Caroline—an ante-dated Bloomer — assumes male attire, and

Two years and a half on the ocean,
She sailed with her young sailor bold.

On her return, the effect of her novel style of dress on her father's nerves, is described with commendable simplicity.

Caroline went straightway to her father,
In her jacket and trousers of blue;
He received her, and that moment fainted,
When first she appeared in [his] view.

He recovers, however, from the shock communicated by the blue trousers, and

They are married, and Caroline's portion
Is twenty-five thousand in gold;
So now they are happy and cheerful,
Caroline and her young sailor bold.

Observe, that by a not uncommon rhythmical license, the accent of this lady's name is shifted between the first syllable and the third, according to convenience.

Our next heroine has set her heart upon her parents' "Bonny Labouring Boy," and proceeds thus:

I courted him for twelve long months, but
 little did I know
 My cruel parents thought to prove our
 overthrow.

Being coerced —

Eight hundred pounds and all my clothes
 I took that very night,
 And with the lad that I adored to Belfast
 I did take flight;
 His love it has entangled me, and that I
 can't deny,
 So to America I'll go with my bonny la-
 bouring boy.

Two ladies with military tastes,
 and no less than five with ungo-
 vernable nautical propensities —
 in other words, female soldiers
 and sailors — are commemorated
 in our bundle. The narrative of
 "The Undaunted Female" de-
 scribes how young Mary, who was
 a damsel fair, so virtuous and so
 kind, enlisted in the regiment with
 her lover, and how

They fought them on the Sutlej till the
 Indians did give o'er,
 Did Mary and her William *in the late*
Indian war.

We may here take an opportu-
 nity of quoting from another
 ballad, a singularly condensed
 and simple statement of the tender
 feelings of a young lady whose
 lover is a military gentleman: —

When I do awake in the morning,
 My breast it does tremble with woe;
 To think that a youth who's so charming,
 Has such dangerous places to go.

The last verse of "The Hand-
 some Cabin Boy" contains a re-
 markable passage:

Then each man took a bumper, and drank
 "Success to Troy,"
 And likewise to the cabin-boy, was nei-
 ther man nor boy.

The sailors drinking Success to
 Troy, would be indeed profoundly
 unintelligible; were not the hypo-
 thesis open to us that the poet
 thought reason an unimportant
 matter, compared with rhyme.

In "The Lady and the Sailor,"
 occurs one of the very few bits
 which can be said to possess,
 accidentally or otherwise, any
 merit in thought or expression.
 It is this:

As the lady and [the] sailor was crossing
 the deep,
 Says the lady to the sailor, "You sigh in
 your sleep."
 "I once had a sweetheart," the sailor did
 say,
 "And by her cruel parents I was sent
 away."

The two following lines of
 "Erin's Lovely Home" are better
 yet; the speaker is a convict:

There is seven links upon my chain, and
 every link a year
 Before I can return again to the arms of
 my dear.

Some of the comic and satirical
 pieces are not without spirit; but,
 as a general rule, the style of
 this class of ballads is even more
 wretched than their typography.
 In one amorous ditty, the lover
 says:

I drew up near this lovely maid,
 All with a complaisant smile,
 My heart being captivated quite,
 I stood and viewed her for awhile.

In another, he avers:

Her slender waist and carriage has frac-
 tured my poor brain.

A third song commences in
 language which the poet or the
 printer, or both, have contrived

with great success to invest with the not uncommon poetical merit of impenetrable obscurity:

Being in the month of May, when all vestitudes was gay,
A young shepperdess came viewing on her flock.

And in a fourth the swain inquires of his Mary:

Ah, lovely creature, the pride of Nature!
Did Cupid send you to the Shannon side?

where to, properly enough,

She then made answer, it's all [romance,
Sir,]

For you to flatter a simple dame;
I'm not so stupid or duped by Cupid,
So I defy you on me to scheme.

On the whole, mythology has gone much out of esteem. Our present collection furnishes only one thorough specimen of the old classical-allusion ballad style; namely, "The Maid of Slievebawn;" which opens with Cupid and Morpheus, and prefers its own heroine to Venus with her peacocks, to the Nine Muses, and likewise to Juno, "when drawn in her chariot by swans." The writer, to get himself into a proper frame of mind for inspiration, proposes to "range to and fro,"

Reflecting on Cupid, who on me did promise to fawn;

adding —

I'm trepanned in love's chains, and in pain for the maid of Slievebawn.

He proceeds as follows, in a state of mind sublimely distracted:

The grand King of England, this beautiful maid he had seen,
He would not let Paris deprive that fair maid of his queen;

To Old Ireland he'd sail to O'Neill at that fair one's demand,
His grand Trojan troops he'd encamp at the foot of Slievebawn.

Let us now turn to the Party Ballads. Of these we have fourteen; some poetical, some on Church polemics.

In Ireland, the mass of the people recognise but two great parties; the one, composed of Catholics, patriots, would-be rebels—these being interchangeable ideas; the other, of Protestants, Orangemen, wrongful holders of estates, and oppressors in general—these also being interchangeable ideas. It is true, there are Protestants who rank on the popular side, and who, on occasion, receive tumultuous applause from the common cry. Smith O'Brien and John Mitchell were of these; and the Young Irelanders exerted themselves to build an Irish party, on other than the old ground of priestly Catholicism; but herein lay one cause of their failure. THE PEOPLE, in the confused brains of its many heads, could not, would not, and will not understand more than two parties. The exceptions are too few to affect their general habit of mind, if, indeed, the many-headed (when they came to think of it) would really trust a Protestant patriot, save in the belief of his readiness to join the true Church, when the proper time should arrive. Such of their own clergy as profess "loyalty," are considered *to know what they are about*.

"The Brave Defenders of the

Church of Rome," is in celebration of one of the boys of the '98, who was sent to "Vandimonds land"

Because he was head leader
Of Father Murphy's Shelmoneers.

The Reverend General Murphy, one of the most renowned of the chiefs of '98, who used to boast of catching the heretic balls in his fingers, is often alluded to in these ballads. This ballad and some of the others were, no doubt, written many years ago; but their sentiments are by no means out of date; and Father Murphy's fame vividly survives in some of the most recent effusions. The fourth verse of The Brave Defenders presents a curious junction of the theologian with the insurgent:

For being a Roman Catholic I was trampled
on by Harry's breed,

[meaning Henry VIII.]

And for fighting in defence of my God,
my country, and my creed;
Transubstantiation is the faith that we
depend upon;
Look and you will find it in the sixth
chap. of St. John.
As Moses and Elias, they told us of our
heavenly church,
That we in future ages should suffer per-
secution much.

Four songs resound the praises of "brave Dr. Cahill," who appears to have sprung into sudden popularity on the strength of some amiable remarks of the brave Doctor, to the effect, that there was not a man, woman, or child in France, who would not dance with joy at the prospect of a favourable opportunity of

plunging a knife into the body of an Englishman. The first, is called "The Penal Law," and says:

Brave Dr. Cahill he does not despair,
He wrote some fine letters our spirits to
cheer.

Chorus.

Be sober and steady, and mind what
you're at,
It's not like '98, — there is something in
that.

The chorus to verse three, is varied thus:

It's not like Ballingarry, so mind what
you're at,
Nor the days of John Mitchell, — there is
something in that.

"It's not like" is a common idiom, implying that the business will be better managed next time.

The "New Song on the great Dr. Cahill's Visit to England," is addressed to "you Romans throughout England's nation," and declares the Doctor's object to be to:

Join us in true combination
Against a vile heretic tribe.

After several rather truculent lines, it ends thus:

We have noble fine brave men in England,
We have them in France and in Spain;
We have them across the Atlantic,
Preparing to come o'er the main.
We have noble brave Cahill, our leader,
And millions of heroes at home,
Then why should we longer be craving?
[craven]

But fearlessly fight for our own.

In the next lay, another doctor divides the honours with the great Cahill. The Poem is called "Doctors Betagh and Cahill," and commences significantly:

Come all you loose young fellows, you
 know well what I mean,
 Prepare yourselves in time my boys, I'd
 have you mind the green;
 The weather it looks gloomy, I think
 we're near a change,
 And little John, the Lepreghaun, he is
 nearly quite deranged.

Chorus.

Set get your hooks in order, boys, be
 ready for your work;
 Now is your time or never, boys, before
 we are all burked.

"Little John," means the Prime
 Minister, who is constantly satiri-
 sed in the same crushing manner.
 The nature of the expected reaping
 for which the hooks are to be kept
 in order, is made plain enough a
 few lines farther down:

Father Murphy was a reaper, the best I
 ever seen,
 He reaped away without delay—he loved
 the shamrock green.

Here is a caution against traitors
 in the camp:

So if you hire a reaper, take care of who
 you chose,
 Don't be like me, Master Edward, or
 your corn you will lose;
 The traitor's name was Reynolds—attend
 to what I say,
 Before the work it was commenced he did
 us all betray.

In conclusion, Eighteen Hun-
 dred and Fifty-two, the year of
 hope and dread, is thus alluded
 to:

That holy prophet as I call, Dr. Betagh
 was his name,
 The last sermon he preached was in Rose-
 mary-lane;
 Many signs, he said, and tokens through
 the seasons we would see,
 Large hail with heavy lightnings after '47
 it would be.

In Eighteen Hundred and Ten, he prophe-
 sied, it's true,
 That Ireland would flourish in the year
 Fifty-two;

He prophesied America for us our rights
 would gain,
 In spite of England's perfidy they'll burst
 our galling chain.

The "New Hunting Song" is
 an allegory. Brought to the bar
 of zoological science, it is rather
 faulty; for it represents the
 "Scorpion" in the character of
 a beast of the chase pursued with
 horn and hound. Neither can the
 geographical details of this ballad
 escape criticism. The scorpion
 is hunted to Athlone, Killaloe,
 Hanover, Dover, the rocks of
 Gibraltar, and a few other loca-
 lities, until finally run down into
 the Red Sea.

And to join the chase from every place
 The sportsmen they will gather,
 From America, both France and Spain,
 In spite of wind or weather;
 The bravest hunters that can be,
 Brave Cahill has them selected,
 &c., &c.

"The Heroes of '98" announces
 its subject in its title, and is more
 happy in a tolerably relevant
 illustration than most of its fellow
 lyrics; being headed with a wood-
 cut representing a man running a
 sword through the body of another
 man. "Tara's Hill, or Erin's
 Glory," is of similar import;
 referring with opprobrium to
 Strongbow, Oliver Cromwell,
 Dutch Bill, and other historical
 characters by whom "we were
 wrecked with tormentation." The
 noticeable part of this ballad is the
patch at the end of it, glaringly
 different from the rest of the stuff:

Now, to conclude, God send long life to
 Queen Victoria,
 And that we may see our nation free from
 vile Whig or Tory;

May plenty smile round Erin's Isle — may
 peace and freedom flourish,
 May all agree in unity, and broils and
 quarrels perish!

This exemplifies the trick of mouth-honour made inveterate in the Irish "million," by long contact with superiors to whom they feel no true submission.

In truth, the mass of the Irish people, politically considered, have not one clear or even semi-transparent notion about their grievances, or wishes, or aims, or means, or loves, or hates, beyond this: that they recognise, in a way, two parties, looming in misty antagonism; and would (if excited to the proper pitch) do anything they could think of, or that anyone could put into their heads, to get the better of THE OTHER PARTY. Their agitators have crammed them with unscrupulous rhetoric, and have found ignorance the best digester of that sort of food. They are a people of units cohering externally by the mouldings of habit; destitute of a vital bond, or common purpose. If, at times, this people assume the shape and motion of a community, the force is still external, and, as it were, galvanic; for the immediate consequence of its withdrawal is a relapse into fragmentary feebleness.

"The Irish Emigrant's Address to his Irish Landlord," exults in the turning of the tables, by which their "honours," the landlords, are to be reduced to the poor-house and *India Buck* (Indian-corn porridge). It is sung to the tune

of "O Susanna, don't you cry for me," and opens thus:

I'm now going to a country where
 From Poor-rates I'll be free,
 For poor Ireland's going to the dogs
 As fast as fast can be;
 You know you'd like to stop me,
 So I'll do it on the sly;
 With me I'll take a half-year's rent,
 Your Honour — won't you cry?

This ballad, treating, not without sarcastic force, of passing events and sharp actualities, must sink fast into the ears of its audiences, and somewhat deeply too. The copy we quote was purchased from two women, singing it loud and shrill through a town on a fair or market day. They seemed to have plenty of eager customers, and more attentive listeners. It appears worth while to add some further extracts:

I don't believe I ped the rint
 Within the last three years,
 And so I owe your Honour
 Some trifle of arrears;
 I mention this, because I think
 You'd like to say *good-bye*!
 For these arrears I have them snug;
 Your Honour, don't you cry.

Chorus.

O, your Honour! — the Poor-house is
 your dart,
 Before, like those by famine died, your
 childer breaks your heart.

"Your dart," is vernacular for "your resource." Verse five, relates how his Honour sent his bailiff:

For fear I'd stir the corn,
 But his efforts they did fail;
 For I tied him in the barn,
 And that night I took leg-bail.

Verse seven, proceeds —

I hope your Honour may have luck
 When all the country's waste,

And when they give out-door relief,
 May your Honour get a taste.
 But if they built a union
 For the landlords there to fly,
 And you get in — why, then I think
 Your Honour need not cry.

And, in concluding, this Irish emigrant (who is a very different character from the sentimental one who sits upon the stile) sings sarcastically:

Now, when I'm landed in New York,
 That moment I will get
 A gallon of rum, and drink your health,
 With what I'm in your debt.

It would appear that the parallel which has become stereotyped in the newspaper phrase of "Irish Exodus," is not to be left imperfect in the point of spoliation of the Egyptians.

"The Poor Irish Bard" also descants on distress, emigration, Dives and Lazarus, but in a moralising and mendicant key. His explanation of one of the misfortunes of the country, asks quotation: —

To kill your potato crop — rent them
 asunder
 By the nocturnal clap of the cloud's roaring
 thunder,

which, perhaps, enables us to realise some amount of prophetic meaning in Nat Lee's line,

A mad potato on the whirlwind flies.

This has taken us out of the domain of Party. Of songs of general Patriotism, we have five; on sea-voyages, wrecks, and pirates, eight, including "A Lamentation on the Loss of the Barque Edmond," with the names of the passengers lost, given at foot. Of

regular "Farewells to Ireland" (besides numberless ballads that refer to or conclude in America), we have three. "Patrick Fitzpatrick's Farewell" presents a rude picture of misery, which is unexaggerated and touching.

Those three long years I've laboured
 hard, as any on Erin's Isle,
 And still was scarcely able my family to
 keep;
 My tender wife and children three, under
 the lash of misery,
 Unknown to friends and neighbours,
 I've often seen to weep.
 Sad grief it seized her tender heart, when
 forced her only cow to part,
 And canted* was before her face, the
 Poor-rates for to pay;
 Cut down in all her youthful bloom, she's
 gone into her silent tomb;
 Forlorn I will mourn her loss when in
 America.

The popular hopes of emigrants are thus expressed: —

Let Erin's sons and daughters fair now for
 the promised land prepare,
 America, that beauteous soil, will soon
 your toils repay;
 Employment it is plenty there; on beef
 and mutton you can fare;
 From five to six dollars is your wages
 every day.
 Now see what money has come o'er those
 three years from Columbia's shore,
 But for it numbers now was laid all in
 their silent clay;
 California's golden mines [my boys] are
 open now to crown our joys,
 So all our hardships we'll dispute when
 in America.

We have five *Criminal* ballads; the usual characteristics of which class are, that the judge is cruel, the counsel for the prisoner "noble" and "bold," and the prisoner himself an object of deep sympathy.

* Auctioned.

The glories of the great French Emperor, once a favourite theme, linger in two effusions. The "Grand Conversation on the Remains of Napoleon" is immensely absurd; but "Buonaparte's Farewell to Paris" demands our last spare moments for its opening stanza.

I'll visit that splendid citadel metropolis
called Paris,

Situated every morning by Sol's refulgent beams;

Conjoined by bright Aurora advancing from the orient,

With radiant light adorning in pure shining rays;

Commanding Cynthia to retire where the windows glance like fire,

The universe admire their merchandize and store,

With Flora's spreading fragrance the fertile plains to decorate,

To illuminate the royal Corsican again to the French shore.

What follows is not unworthy of this commencement; but we can do no more than advert to the affecting antithesis, wherein "Napoleon Buonaparte, the conqueror of nations," who "trampled Dukes and Earls, and splendid congregations," complains of being "Now in a desert isle annoyed with rats."

About a dozen miscellaneous, and half-a-dozen intentionally comic ballads — sung with eccentric choruses — go nigh to exhaust our collection. The comic ballads have, perhaps, more nature and smartness than those of any other class, and are remarkably free from improprieties: which, in some cases, their subjects and general downrightness might seem to foreshadow.

Any didactic essay on ballads might fairly be expected to commence with the remark that a wise old writer has said, "Let me make the ballads of a nation, and who will may make the laws." This saw (which is somewhat rhetorical in form, and exceedingly musty) is at least as applicable to melodious, credulous, impulsive Ireland, as to any other country in world. And, certainly, in the matter of ballads — let the laws be what they may — Ireland is far enough from having justice done to her. The humble dwellings of the land are pervaded by the national melodies; many of which have become the darlings of the world and of fame, whilst many others, perhaps some as beautiful, have never been noted down, and are perishing yearly, by twos and threes, or lingering only with an old nurse, and an old piper, here and there. Moore's words flew high above these humble dwellings; nor have any of the Young-Ireland lyrics in the least succeeded in becoming, in the true sense, popular. The sphere of Moore's songs was the drawing-room; of Young-Ireland's, the Repeal Meeting-room and the Club-room. Songs for a people must find their natural element beside the cottage hearth. Such simple and pathetic ditties, in the old Irish tongue, are till sometimes heard.

In the English tongue, the national songs of Ireland — perhaps comprising three-fourths of the national literature — are such as

are sung about the streets and country towns, and sold by wandering pedlars; just such ballads, in short, as we have quoted and described.

THE LINNET-HAWKER.

I MET, in a close City square,
A Linnet-hawker, hawking loud;
And, though small melody was there
To draw a member from the crowd,
A mournful thought went with his song,
That secretly attracted me:
So, fixed I stood, and brooded long,
While thus he chimed in rudest key; —
“Linnets, linnets, full-song linnets, O!”

The fledgling bliss, the wavy flight,
The feathery ecstasies that flow
From freedom in the airy light,
The little captives may not know.
Of their own birthright robb'd, alas!
What voice of anguish might they lift
In music for the time that was —
Betrayed by so divine a gift!
Linnets, linnets, full-song linnets, O!

Far from their woodland joys are they!
Far, far from the forsaken nest,
And from their parents far away!
Who sit and brood with vacant breast
Amid the sunlight on the leaves,
Where now a fitful song they sing
Of sorrow that more inly grieves,
And will not hope in anything:
Linnets, linnets, full-song linnets, O!

But now — since evil has its good —
A latent truth the soul knows well;
What mission have the stolen brood
In this great City's depths to dwell?
It is to cheer the sick at heart
With Eden songs of country days;
Of grass, and balm for every smart;
Of freshness, flowers, and woodland
ways.
Linnets, linnets, full-song linnets, O!

And, through their little throats, a stream
Of sweet impulsive song will flow;
To some — a yearning and a dream;
To all — a sweet relief from woe.
Heard, spirit-like, the tide to stem

Of toiling men, who muse and moan
To breathe the woods again! — for them,
Old Linnet-hawker, still sing on:
Linnets, linnets, full-song linnets, O!

A DUTCH FAMILY PICTURE.

THERE is a class of our fellow-subjects in the East which appears to have been somewhat unfairly dealt with by writers of Indian books and Colonial historians, inasmuch as no notice has been taken of them, save in some of the official returns of the population issued by the Colonial Office, in which, by the way, they figure rather prominently as regards number. I allude to the burgher inhabitants of our large colonial towns within the tropics.

In Europe, the term “Burgher” was applied, in olden days, to all citizens, or dwellers in principal towns, carrying on trades or professions therein. In the East, or, rather, within the tropics, it is used to designate the descendants of old Portuguese and Dutch colonists — a class at once numerous and respectable. At the Cape colony they form the majority of settlers; but, in the tropical settlements of Ceylon, Singapore, &c., they are greatly outnumbered by other races. When the former island was taken possession of by the British forces, many of the Dutch civil servants returned to Holland or went on to Java; but very many were too poor to travel, or preferred remaining where they had been born. Their descendants have continued to fill many

leading posts in the colonial establishments, and nearly all the minor appointments in the Judicial and Revenue Departments are bestowed upon these and the Portuguese burghers. The Dutch have been, and are to this day, very careful not to intermarry with any Cingalese; thus their habits and their characters have undergone but little change. The Portuguese, on the other hand, have been far less scrupulous on this point; and their descendants of the present day are to be seen of every shade and grade — from the well-clad medical student, to the half-starved, half-naked street-sweeper, or the bazaar-keeper.

Until very recently, there was little, if any, social intercourse between the European and burgher classes: a line of demarcation had been drawn between the two races, which very few dared to pass. This extended to such of the proscribed colonists as held important posts under Government, who, while their abilities and characters were owned and respected by their European fellow-civilians, found no admittance within the threshold of their homes.

If, however, the English colonists contrive to monopolise the best berths in the service, the burghers have managed to secure to themselves the most comfortable dwellings, with the best gardens. The same jealous exclusiveness which has so completely separated these two classes, impels the European to take up his residence in a quarter as far removed

as possible from the suburbs usually occupied by the burghers. The English merchants and civil servants will be found located along the edge of some high road, within a very small patch of burnt-up paddock, once green. Their tenements are of no particular order, being mostly long rambling white-washed places, very like huge rabbit-hutches. A few palms occasionally make an attempt at shading the dusty hot verandah in front; while small tufts of cinnamon-bushes are to be seen withering away in the parched sand, evidently disgusted with their circumstances. How different the dwellings of the burghers! Some of these, it is true, are in the midst of the *pettah*, or native town, but most of them will be found scattered about in quiet shady lanes. Many are quite hidden from the passer-by, amidst a dense little forest of fruit-trees, rose-bushes, and evergreens — concealed amidst leaves and flowers as snugly as though they were so many huge red-bricked birds' nests.

It is seldom, indeed, that anything occurs to break the dull monotony of life in the East. With no public amusements, no public promenades, colonists seldom meet each other save at the churches. There are, however, a few days in the year when a little change in this clock-work existence takes place amongst the burgher population; when grim-looking Dutchmen relax the stern rigidity of their bronzed features,

and assume some gay suit of many colours. When portly sleepy dames rouse up for the emergency, startle the quiet family halls with their busy tongues, and scare the old watch-dog with the vivid brilliancy of new ribands and clean lace. One of these very few and much-prized occasions is New Year's Day.

In the afternoon of the first day in January, 1850, I strolled out from the old, rambling, crumbling fort of Colombo, over a very shaky wooden drawbridge, through the broad prim-looking streets of the native town. The weather was fine; that is to say, parchingly hot; the sky was undimmed by a single cloud. The bland sea-breeze played coyly with the feathery foliage of the tall palms and arckas, and waved against the azure sky many a top of broad-leaved bright green bananas. The native bazaar, at the corner of the town, with one end jutting out upon the sea, was, for once, clean and gay. The dealers in fish, fruit, and curry-stuffs, appeared to have put on new clothes with the New Year. The huge white turbans, and gilt-edged muslin scarfs, glistened in the noonday sun; and gorgeous, many-coloured vests and wrappers vied, in the brilliancy of their tints, with the many-hued piles of fruits and balmy flowers. The very fish and vegetables appeared cleaner than usual; while spices, condiments, and sweetmeats looked down from many a loaded shelf to tempt the passer-by.

Leaving this motley scene, where the song of the Hindoo dancers blended in wild harmony with the Cingalese tom-tom, or drum, I passed on to the heart of the dwelling-place of the middle-class of Burghers.

Before every house was an ample verandah, partly veiled by an open bamboo curtain. In these lofty cool retreats, were seated the many families of the place, receiving or paying the good wishes of the season. Once upon a time, the streets were graced by rows, on either side, of shady spreading *souriya* trees, bending over the footways, and peeping in at the verandahs, to see how the inmates were getting on; winking the large eyes of their yellow tulip flowers at the daughters, and enticing pretty birds to come and sing amongst the leafy branches. But this was in the good old days of sleepy Holland. Now, all are gone — green boughs, winking flowers, and singing-birds. More's the pity!

As I passed along, I met many groups of old, young, and middle-aged, evidently families, in full burgher holiday costume. They were, in each case, followed by two or more turbaned fierce-looking domestics, bearing enormous trays, piled up with something hidden from vulgar gaze by flowing veils of muslin. I could not help calling to mind the processions of slaves, in the Arabian Nights, which we are informed followed the steps of caliphs and sorcerers, bearing with them huge

presents of precious things from subterranean worlds. I watched some of these domestic embassies, and perceived that they entered the houses of some of the neighbours; there was a great fluster and bustle, and no end to the talking and laughing in the great verandahs. I entered the dwelling of a Dutchman to whom I was known, and found one of these family groups within. A rare merry scene it was. The deputation had just arrived; friends were shaking hands; the great black slave of the "Arabian Nights" uncovered the hidden treasures on the tray, and, lo! there were discovered — not piles of glittering sequins, and emeralds, and rubies, as I had expected, but a few bunches of yellow plantains, some green oranges, a handful of limes, half-a-dozen pine-apples, and a homely-looking cake frosted with sugar. These were the universal New Year offerings amongst that simple community, given as tokens of good-fellowship and neighbourly feeling; and, as such, welcomed and cheerfully responded to. Little corpulent glasses of cordials, or *schiedam*, were handed round amongst all arrivals, rich or poor; good wishes were exchanged; a few stale jokes were cracked; inquiries were made for the grandmother who was too infirm to join the party; and away went the neighbours with another slave and another heap of hidden gifts, to the next acquaintance. These presents are not confined among

equals; the most humble menial scrapes a few *challies* together for the occasion, and lays at his master's feet an oblation of fruits and flowers.

The very "grass-cutter," the miserable hanger-on of stables, contrives, somehow, to get a few pines and plantains on a blue-and-white dish; and, poverty-stricken though she be, pours out her simple gifts before her master with gentle dignity.

Group after group went through the town. Gay parties continued to amuse themselves in many a dusty verandah. Scores of *meer-schaums* sent forth circling clouds of fragrant white smoke; while many a dreamy Dutchman nodded in his high-backed, richly-carved chair of ebony. The hour of vespers approached. There were heard dozens of little tinkling bells; and forth came scores of damsels clad in pure white. Again the dusty streets were busy and alive, and many of the good Catholic verandahs lost their chief charmers.

Straying onward from this bustling neighbourhood, I reached the outskirts of the town, where are to be seen some of the prettiest and most retired of the burghers' dwellings. These are mostly fine old mansions of red brick, with solid, grim-looking gable-ends frowning down upon the old rusty gates, and the great round well by the forest of plantain-trees. I found myself standing before one of these, in a sweet green lane lined with lofty palms, spreading

gorekas, and huge India-rubber trees. The heavy wall in front hid the sturdy mansion from my view; but, the gates being open, I obtained a peep of the Oriental paradise within. Rare old fruit-trees on the grass-plot were well laden with clustering, many-coloured fruit! They must have been in bearing when the old gentleman in the easy chair, and the pink cotton trousers, and black skull-cap, was a mere child. How cool the place looked amidst all that dense green foliage! One might almost have caught a cold in the head by merely looking in at the gate. The sun evidently never troubled the little children playing on the grass under the thick clusters of mangoes, sour sops and plantains; except, perhaps, for a few minutes at noon. What a jolly old house it was, to be sure, with verandahs as large as the Burlington Arcade in London; and such windows! They looked like so many roofs of hot-houses let sideways into the walls; and, as to the doors, one might have fancied, from their size, that the family were in the habit of keeping their carriage in the back parlour, or setting out the dinner-table in the doorway: there would have been abundance of room in either case, and a little to spare, too!

There were nice beds of flowers on each side of the large grass-plot, and orange-trees; and the passer-by peeping in far enough, as I did, might have caught a glimpse of one or two pairs of

small pretty feet, and faces to match, hidden away cosily among the roses and oleanders. Well, those are nice, quiet, enjoyable places, and much better than the hot dusty dignified rabbit-hutches of the English on the other side of the fort!

I passed on, as my fancy led me, until I came to another stout Dutch residence, which pleased me, though not so much as the other one had done. It was altogether another description of house, though doubtless pleasant enough in its way. It stood close upon the road, with all the garden behind it, so that one saw nothing but red bricks and little Dutch tiles. There was no peeping in, there, through any open gates; no catching the daughters quietly among the flowers.

The owner of the house chanced to be enjoying his evening pipe in the capacious doorway; and, seeing me surveying the premises, he at once rose from his quiet seat and bade me welcome. When he learnt my desire to examine his mansion, he gladly conducted me through the great rooms to the garden. The principal room or hall was of enormous magnitude. I believe you might have driven a stage-coach, with very frisky leaders, round the dinner-table without fear of touching the army of chairs ranged along the walls. I could almost fancy the builder had made a mistake, and roofed in a good part of the road. I looked up, and thought I should never get a sight of the roofing, and

wondered whether the sparrows building their nests so high there, ever felt giddy and fell down upon the dinner-table. The other rooms were smaller, but all spacious enough, and well filled with ebony and calamander furniture. On the whole, the mansion was elegant and refined. There was a degree of polish about the windows, and a sort of rakishness in the couch-covers and ottoman drapery, which struck me, while the very screen in the doorway had a jaunty air which there was no resisting.

Right and left from the large house, extended, backward, two ranges of sleeping apartments and stores, with long stone terraces, filled with flowering shrubs in gigantic pots. At the farther end were rows of huge, suspiciously-shaped jars, looking as though they belonged to Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. At the termination of this pottery, were wide flights of steps leading to a neatly-laid-out garden, full of the richest flowers, and greenest shrubs, and most tempting fruit-trees, the eye ever saw, or fancy pictured. There was a small fountain in the midst, with a seat by the side, and round it lay scattered children's toys.

On the whole, this was a pretty place, but not so natural and home-like as the other; besides, the stiff terrace and the jars of the Forty Thieves rather marred its beauty.

Such houses are mostly the dwelling-places of old Dutch families, the heads of which may

be lawyers, or deputy registrars, or chief clerks in a government office, and are none the worse for that. But, when I mention Dutchmen, by the bye, do not let any one for a moment picture to himself the burly, bright-visaged, many-breeched gentry of friend Knickerbocker: that race has died out long since, within the tropics. Nankeen trousers, a white jacket and waistcoat — all fitting pretty closely on a rather slim-built figure — with a modern London beaver, make up the externals of the Dutch burghers of the East.

Determined to see all that related to the day among the burghers, I had accepted an invitation from a Dutchman, a worthy book-keeper grown grey in the service of one of the leading merchants, to join an evening party at his house. I arrived there between eight and nine o'clock, and found old Samuel Kugper at the door, anxiously awaiting me. I was at once introduced to Mrs. Kugper, a portly dame, whom I found seated in solemn silence, on a huge ottoman, at one end of the long room. In vain I uttered innumerable speeches, full of compliment; equally useless were my inquiries after her family. The lady, I found, understood not one word of English; and this is the case with most of the female members of these families.

The room we were assembled in, was one of the huge warehouse-looking places I have already described. There were acres of glass

in the walls. You could see all that was going on in the supper-room, everything in the garden, and not a little in the bed-rooms. In front of these fields of windows, were long rows of seats nearly all occupied by Dutch and Portuguese ladies of every age. They presented a strange contrast to the merry parties I had beheld in the day-time. All the fun and jollity were gone. It was not etiquette to laugh or to speak aloud before the dancing began, and so all sat stiff and silent, like so many mummies. Had our assembling been for a funeral, or for reading a will, the solemnity of the company could scarcely have been greater. It was painful. Our host, however, possessed good-humour enough for half the party; he was all smiles, from the heel of his shoe to the tips of his grey hair. More than once, I caught him rushing out into the garden to have a laugh all to himself. The wife was quite another sort of person: happy enough, no doubt, if she could but have felt quite sure about the supper: but I could see the cares of fifty years of mullagatawny written on her brow. Half a century of obstinate *appos*, bad cooks, and impertinent *ayahs*, to say nothing of two generations of hooping-cough, small-pox, and measles, is surely trial enough for any ordinary woman. It had had its effects upon Mrs. Kugper.

The young men grouped themselves about as we see soldiers on parade-ground: some were forming into squares, a few into

single line: others, again, were leading off in columns. A few of the knowing shots were thrown out in advance as sharp-shooters, and made attacks on the female forces, entrenched on the sofas and ottomans; but without any visible effect.

The monotony of this curious scene was at length broken by the entrance of a swarm of fierce-looking domestics, swathed and turbaned in rich profusion, bearing before them little square stands — a sort of card-tables in reduced circumstances — which they placed with all due solemnity before the dumb ladies on the sofas.

Other gay-looking servants followed, with — What would the reader imagine? Nectar or sherbet? No; with huge tureens of reeking hot *soup*! The gentlemen proceeded to pour out libations of mullagatawny into divers soup-plates on the little card-tables. It was curious to see how animated the ladies became, and how very kindly they took to the smoking beverage; evidently as hot as capsicums and a good fire could make it. I could but wonder of what material their throats were constructed; and, when I perceived that the soup was followed by hecatombs of cake and goblets of hot-spiced wine, I felt as if on fire. The thermometer in the large open verandah, outside, stood at somewhere about ninety degrees; yet these scalding potations were swallowed as though freezing from an ice-house. The

honest, warm-hearted burghers, feeling, no doubt, the soothing influence of the feast, prepared to add to their enjoyments by a dance.

The squeaking notes of an old violin, accompanied by a brace of tom-toms, diffused activity into the hitherto dull assembly. The dance was led off by — I perspire freely as I think of it — the hostess and myself. It was none of your sleepy, walking affairs, such as may be met with in English society, but a regular hard-working quadrille, such a one as you might fancy Laplanders would enjoy during one of their severe winters. I need not relate my sufferings during that time of trial. Suffice it to say, that when I staggered out into the cool shrubbery, I found myself in a condition which could scarcely have been worse if I had spent a morning with the Fire-king, in one of his favourite ovens.

Dancing was followed by some very indifferent native theatricals, performed on the lawn behind the house; of which dancing girls, snakes, and a concert of tom-toms, formed a portion, much to the enjoyment of the guests, who seemed not difficult to please. And what a good thing *that* is!

I felt no inclination for more dancing, or to partake of the enormous supper which I perceived to be in course of preparation, and, accordingly, left unperceived, flung myself into my

palanquin carriage, and bade the driver go home. The night was then magnificent. A bright and lovely moon flung many a new charm among the gorgeous foliage that waved and lightly danced in the cool sea-breeze. The vast Indian Ocean broke peacefully in phosphorescent curling waves along a pebbly shore. The air was soft and still, broken only by fitful echoes from some merry-making party in the distance.

My drive took me by the sea-shore, and, as I lay gazing out upon the far ocean, I noticed a little black shadow on the horizon, like a ship, or like the shadow of some monstrous winged thing. I was tired of looking, and sleepy withal; so, I lay back and dozed. I looked out again, and started to find how dark it had become. The horse-keeper, too, was urging the animal to its utmost speed. The little black speck on the horizon had swollen to a mighty, hideous mass of thunder-cloud. Already half the heavens were shrouded in pitchy darkness. I opened my carriage windows and looked out. The storm was coming up with giant strides; some distance out at sea, a wall of smoking, hissing, bubbling rain joined the clouds and waters, and shut out all beyond. I could hear that mighty cataract of tempest fall with a roaring sound, nearer and nearer. Before me, all was dark and stormy: behind, the many groves of waving palms still slept in moonlit beauty. The distant hills were clear and bold,

and seemed so near as though my voice could reach them.

It was in vain my horse was urged onward: the storm was swifter than any living thing. The great black smoking wall came hissing on; and, from its darkened crest, loud peals of thunder burst. I have been in many a storm in my day, but this was the most magnificent I ever saw. To go onward became absolutely impossible; so fierce was the tempest. The driver, therefore, turned the horse's head away from the sea, and patiently sat it out. Peal after peal of thunder rent the air. It seemed as though all the powder-magazines in the world were being blown up. First, there was a cracking and splitting, as of gigantic sheets of metal torn asunder; then, a heavy rumbling, like ten thousand loaded waggons being galloped across an iron bridge. The air was no longer darkened; every foot of atmosphere seemed alive with lightning-life. By the glare, I could see some of the noble palms — at least seventy feet high — bending to the gale like willow wands, and literally sweeping the ground with their feathery leaves. More than one upon that terrible night, was shivered into splinters by the lightning; and many a stubborn one that would not bend lay crushed and helpless on its sandy grave.

The howling of the wind, the thunder-peals, the heavy pattering of the huge rain-drops, had well-nigh stunned me. In nature,

however, as with man, the fiercest outbreaks are the soonest quelled. In half-an-hour the moon shone out again in undimmed beauty. The air was calm and hushed; and the parched earth and herbs, grateful for such a copious draught, sent many a fragrant blessing on the breeze, to tell their thanks.

CHIPS.

STREET-CAB REFORM.

A LITTLE "common sense on wheels"* has travelled to us lately from Munich. A lady gives us a description of a new hackney-coach which has been recently set up in that city: — "The new droschy," she says, "is a beautiful little carriage which holds two persons, and has, altogether, a very elegant appearance. You pay, for two persons, twelve *kreutzers*, or fourpence per hour. There is a printed tariff fastened up in each vehicle; and, the drivers are so civil, that it is quite a pleasure to pay them. They give you change so naturally, that I cannot get over my astonishment. I only wish our cabmen were ever likely to become such respectable individuals. There are various rules attached to the tariff. One is, that each droschy, after dark, must have a couple of lamps, for the use of which the passenger must pay two *kreutzers* (hardly more than a halfpenny) per quar-

* See Vol. VII., page 121.

ter of an hour. After midnight the fare is doubled."

A feeble attempt has lately been made in London to reduce cab-fares to sixpence per mile; but as only one or two hackney proprietors have combined for that object, it has had no success. Not only must the fares be reduced, but the vehicles must be improved. It would be advisable if carriages, similar to the Munich droschys, were started for the accommodation of the public, at even a higher tariff than that applicable to ordinary cabs.

On this point we fully concur with a writer in the "Daily News," who says, "We would recommend that at least two classes of fares should be established. At present one pays as much for a ride in a dilapidated night cab, as for dashing along in the best-appointed Hansom. It may happen that a lady, daintily dressed for a ball, is put into a vehicle whose last occupant was an adipose butcher from Newgate Market; or a broker with an unsound feather bed. Superior carriages must be set up in imitation of the *voitures en remise* of Paris, at eightpence, or even a shilling per mile."

The same writer also recommends that, to prevent disputes, an official list of distances should be compiled and stuck up in each vehicle. "The failure of the Commissioners of Police to construct such a table is no proof that the task is impossible; although it would be both tedious and dif-

ficult. A committee, composed of Mr. Kelly, of the 'Post Office Directory,' Captain Larcom, and Mr. Peter Cunningham, could construct a table of that sort, which would be satisfactory to all parties."

MY FIRST PLACE.

My father died before I can remember anything. My mother had a hard life; and it was all that she could do to keep herself and me. We lived in Birmingham, in a house where there were many other lodgers. We had only one room of our own; and, when my mother went out to work, she locked the door and left me there by myself. Those were dreary days. When it was summer, and the bright sun shone in at the window, I thought of the green fields that I used to see sometimes on Sundays, and I longed to be sitting under a shady tree, watching the little lambs, and all young things that could play about. When it was winter, I used to sit looking at the empty grate, and wishing to see the bright blaze which never came. When mother went away in the winter mornings, she told me to run about to warm myself; and, when I was tired and began to feel cold, to get into the blankets on the bed. Many long and wearisome hours I passed in those blankets; listening and listening to every step upon the stairs, expecting to hear mother's step. At

times I felt very lonely; and fancied, as it began to grow darker and darker, that I could see large strange shapes rising before me; and, though I might know that it was only my bonnet that I looked at, or a gown of mother's hanging up behind the door, or something at the top of the old cupboard, the things seemed to grow larger and larger, and I looked and looked till I became so frightened, that I covered my head with the blanket, and went on listening for mother's return. What a joyful sound to me was the sound of the key put into the door-lock! It gave me courage in an instant: then I would throw away the blanket; and, raising my head with a feeling of defiance, would look round for the things that had frightened me, as if to say, "I don't care for you now." Mother would light the fire, bring something from the basket, and cook our supper. She would then sit and talk to me, and I felt so happy that I soon forgot all that had gone before.

Mother could not always get work. I was glad then; for those days were the Sundays of my life; — she was at home all day; and although we often had nothing to eat but bread and potatoes, she had her tea; and the potatoes always tasted to me at these times better than they did on other days. Mother was not a scholar, so she could not teach me much in that way; but she taught me how to keep our room clean and free from

dust. I did not know much of other children; but I had a little cousin about my own age, who came sometimes on Sundays with my aunt, and sometimes we went to see them.

At last mother was taken ill — so very ill that she could not go out to work, and as I could not do for her all that was wanted to be done, my aunt came to be with us. Mother became worse and worse, and the doctor said he did not think she would ever get better. I heard him say this to aunt, and he said it in such a way as if he thought I could not feel; and I do think there are some people who think that children cannot feel; but I *did* feel it very much. Aunt used to sit up at nights. I had a little bed made in a corner of the room on the floor. One night after I had cried myself to sleep, I started up from a bad dream about dear mother. At first I could not remember where I was, not being used to my strange bed; but, when I did remember, I saw that the rush-light was just burning out. All was very quiet. The quietness frightened me. The light flared for an instant, and then it was gone; but it showed me my aunt lying on the floor with her head leaning on the bed; she was fast asleep. I thought mother was asleep too, and I did not dare to speak. Softly creeping out of bed, I groped my way as well as I could to mother's side. I listened, but I heard no sound; I got nearer to her; I could not hear her breathe; I put out my hand to feel

her face; the face was clammy and almost cold. "Mother! dear mother!" I cried. The cry awoke my aunt; she got a light. Mother was dead.

I cannot remember what happened for a long time afterwards; for I was very ill, and was taken to my aunt's house. I was very miserable when I got better again. I felt quite alone in the world; for though aunt was kind, her kindness was not like mother's kindness. Whenever I could get to be by myself, I used to think of poor mother; and often in the long long nights I would lie away thinking about her, fancying that she was near, saying things to comfort me. Poor mother!

Time passed on, and by degrees I began to feel happier; for through the interest of a kind lady — a Mrs. Jones — I was got into a school, where I was kept entirely, and taught not only reading, writing, arithmetic, and to do needle-work; but was also taught how to do every branch of household work, so as to qualify me to be a servant. At the age of sixteen, suitable places were provided for the girls.

I pass over my school-days. They were very happy ones; but, when I was selected to be the servant of a lady in London, I was very miserable at parting from everybody that I knew in the world, and at going among strangers who would not love me one bit.

It rained heavily on the day I left; and everything to be seen out of the window of the railway

train looked dismal and dripping. When I got to the station, in London, I went into the waiting-room. I waited a long time: one after another went away, till at last I was left alone to watch the pouring rain as it fell faster and faster. I was beginning to feel very dismal indeed, when a smartly dressed young woman came into the waiting-room. At first I thought she was a lady; she came towards me, "Are you the young person from Birmingham?" she said. I was up in a moment: saying, "Yes, Ma'am," curtsying as I spoke. But the minute afterwards I was sorry that I had curtsied; for I was sure *she* was not my mistress.

We were soon in the cab. "Well," said my companion, who I soon knew to be Maria Wild, the housemaid, "and so you took me to be your mistress, did you?" and she laughed in a disagreeable way; "I shan't forget your humble curtsy, and I'll try to keep you up to it." The house at which we stopped was a pretty stone house, standing at a little distance from the road, surrounded by a nice garden. I was glad it was in the country, for the sight of trees and green fields always called to mind those happy Sundays when dear mother was alive. But the country looked very gloomy just then; everything seemed as dull as I was.

I was chilly and shivering, and glad to creep to the fire; no one was in the kitchen. The kettle was boiling: it sounded cheerily, like the voice of friends I had

often heard. The tea-things were set ready, and everything around looked comfortable. By-and-bye in came Maria and another servant; — the cook. She was so smart! I looked at her timidly. "Well!" she said, "now for your curtsy." I knew at once that Maria had been telling her about my mistake. I looked grave, and felt very uncomfortable; but I did not curtsy. "Come, come," said she, "I'll excuse you to-night; you shall have some tea to cheer you up a bit. But don't look so down-hearted, girl; this'll never do; you must pluck up."

Then we sat down. She asked me a great many questions, all about the place I had come from; the relations that I had; everything about the school; what I had done there; till at last I was quite tired of answering. Then I asked some questions in my turn.

The family consisted of a master and mistress, three children (all young), and four servants. My business, I heard, was the care of the second drawing-room, to help the nurse till two o'clock, and after that time to help the cook. I wished that it had fallen to my chance to have had a place more decidedly a *one* place than this seemed to be; but I did not dare to say a word. I was very much tired, and cook told me that I might go to bed; for mistress (who was out) would not return till too late to speak to me that night. Very glad I was to go. I was to sleep in the room with the cook and housemaid; but had a small

bed to myself. Tired as I was, I could not sleep. When they came into the room, they believed me to be asleep, and they went on talking for a long time. I wished not to hear what they said; for though I could not understand half of it, I was sure that what they talked about was very wrong. With such companions I felt that I could never be happy. I longed for morning, that I might write at once to the matron of my school and tell her so.

But what would the matron say? I knew well that she would chide me; for in the very last advice she gave me, she said that I must expect, when I went into the world, to meet with evil-speakers and with evil-doers, and that it must be my constant care to keep myself unspotted from bad example. I thought of this over and over again, and determined that whatever might happen I would try to do right. Besides, I had not seen the nurse yet; she might be a person that I could like; and in this hope I went to sleep.

When I awoke, the bright sunlight was shining in through the window; I was alone in the room, and I was sure that it was very late. I was dressing hurriedly when the door softly opened. It was Maria Wild. "How soundly you have slept!" she said; "I had not the heart to awake you; but you must make haste now, for mistress is down, and has asked for you, and we have finished breakfast." I was not long in following her. The cook had kept some tea

warm for me; her manner seemed kinder, and I wished that I could forget what had passed. By-and-bye the parlour bell rang. It was for me; and, with a beating heart, I prepared to go into the presence of my first mistress.

What a pretty, sweet, gentle lady! and so very young that I could scarcely believe she could be my mistress. She spoke to me most gently, hoped I should prove a good girl; and, without entering into the nature of my duties, merely said that the cook and the nurse would put me in the right way. Dear lady! she was like many other ladies who marry as soon as they leave school; and who, without knowing anything at all about the management of a house, rush into housekeeping.

I wish I could have had all my instructions from my mistress. As it was, I had three distinct mistresses; my real one knowing less about what I did, than either of the others. I was often very much tempted to peep into the beautiful books which were lying about the drawing-room I had the care of. As I dusted them with my brush, once or twice I could not resist; and, one morning I opened the prettiest, in which there were such beautiful engravings, that I turned them all over till I came to the end. One engraving seemed so very interesting that I could not resist reading a little of the story which told about it. I was standing with the book in one hand, the dusting brush in the other, forgetting everything else, when I was startled by the sound of my own name. I turned round and saw my mistress. "Fanny!" repeated my mistress, "this is very wrong; I do not allow this." I could not speak, but I felt myself turn very red, and I put the book hastily on the table. I did not try to make any excuse for what I had done. I was touched by the gentleness with which my mistress had reproved me.

Several weeks passed. I was very miserable, but I struggled hard to bear all as well as I could. I was sure that both the nurse and the cook gave me a great many things to do that they ought to have done themselves; so that I had very little rest, and was very tired when night came. I was certain that I was a restraint on what they had to say to each other: they were by no means sure of me; and, when I entered the kitchen unexpectedly, I knew by their altered tone and manners that they spoke of something different to what they had been speaking about before. I saw many signs pass between them, which they did not think I saw. Sometimes I knew they were trying to see how far they might trust me, and I had a strong wish that they would find out they *never* would be able to trust me.

One day I was cleaning the children's shoes in a little out-house near the kitchen, when my mistress came down to give orders for dinner. The cook did not know I was there. Most of what was said I could hear very distinctly;

for the kitchen-door was open. "Oh! indeed, Ma'am," said the cook, "these young girls eat a great deal; you'd be astonished to see how she makes away with the puddings." — "Change of air has given her an appetite, I suppose," said my mistress. — "Yes, indeed, Ma'am; but if it was an appetite in moderation, I should say nothing about it; but to see her eat in the way she does — why, Ma'am, yesterday, besides the pudding left from the nursery, I had made another for our dinner, and though Mary and I took only the least morsel, there was not a bit left." — "Indeed!" said my mistress, and left the kitchen.

It was hard work for me to keep quiet. Twice I went towards the kitchen-door. I felt myself burn all over with anger; but I was struck dumb by the falsehoods I had heard. There had been no pudding for dinner the day before, and having had a headache, I had eaten no meat; nor could I have been tempted even by the savoury-looking veal cutlets that the cook had prepared for herself and Mary. For some time after my mistress had left the kitchen I remained quite still; indeed, I was scarcely able to move; then I made a rush towards the kitchen-door, intending to upbraid the cook with her wickedness; but again I checked myself. I waited till I could leave the out-house and pass up the back stairs without being seen; then I went into the room where I slept, threw myself upon my little bed, and cried bitterly.

I was roused by the nurse, who had been seeking the children's shoes to take the children out to walk. I washed my eyes, and went out with them. The baby was a nice chubby little thing, about seven months old, but he was what the nurse called "lumpish, and had no spring," so that he was very heavy to carry. When we went out to walk, the nurse always carried baby till we got out of sight of the house; then she gave him to me; and when we returned she always took him again at the same place. After taking one turn on the heath "promenade," we went down by the sand-pits, and walking on till we came to a retired place, the nurse seated herself near a heathy bush, and took a book. My arms ached so very much that I should have been glad to sit down too; but she told me to go on, the other children following me. After I had walked some distance, baby awoke, and began to cry. I could not comfort him. The more I tried, the louder he screamed, and the two little children, frightened at his screams, began to cry too. I turned to go back, but we had gone further than I thought; and the road being irregular, we had picked our way round many tall bushes of heather, all looking so much alike — that I did not know which way to take. In great trouble what to do, and scarcely being able to hold the baby any longer, I shouted "Nurse! nurse!" as loud as I could shout; but so great was the noise made by the screaming of

the children, that my voice could not be heard. Presently, however, to my great relief, the nurse suddenly appeared from behind the bush, near which we were sitting.

What a face of rage she had! "How dare you," she said, "how dare you go so far?" The snatching the child from my arms, she would not hear a word; but as soon as she had made him and the rest of the children quiet, she went on abusing me very much indeed.

We were still some way from home when the church clock chimed a quarter to two. Suddenly the nurse stopped, put her hand into her pocket, and looked very much frightened. "I've left the book," she said, "left it on the bank; run — run directly — make haste — don't lose a moment, or it may be gone." — I stood still; for I felt angry at having been scolded so undeservedly. "Go! go this instant!" I was too late; the book was gone! I scarcely dared to go back. "Not find it!" said the nurse, when I came up to her; "it must be there; you've done this on purpose." When we had reached home, she flung the baby hurriedly into my arms. "I'll go myself," she said.

The book I had seen her take out of her pocket, looked very much like one placed on a side-table in the room of which I had charge, and so great was my curiosity to know if it really were the same, that I could not resist going down to see; so putting the baby (who had begun to cry again)

upon the bed, and telling the little ones to sit still for a minute, down I went. The book was not on the table. I was sure that I had dusted and placed it there that very morning, and I now felt certain that *that* book was the lost one. The nurse returned, but without the book. She seemed very much hurried, and was very cross. She could not have been more so if the book had been lost by any fault of mine. She asked me if I knew the name of it. I told her that I did not; taking care not to mention my suspicion — nay, my certainty — that it was the very book I had dusted and placed on the table that morning. The next day a great change seemed to have come over both the nurse and the cook; their manner was much kinder than ever it had been before. Neither of them said a cross word; yet I was almost certain that the nurse had been telling the cook that I had overheard what she had said to my mistress. The cause of this change puzzled me at first, but I soon suspected that they each wanted to coax me; the one to say nothing about "the large appetite," the other about the lost book.

Since the loss of the book, every time the bell had rung, my heart leaped as though it would burst through my body, and I looked anxiously at Mary Wild when she came into the kitchen again; but nothing came of all this. One day, Mary, having a bad fit of toothache, I had to wait at table. That very afternoon mistress sent

to speak to me; she was sitting in the inner drawing-room. Strange to say, that much as I had thought about the book, at that very moment I had forgotten all about it, and almost started when mistress said, "Fanny, I want to know if you have misplaced a book that was on that table: it is nearly a week since I missed it, but not chancing to want it till now, I forgot to make inquiry about it." I turned very red. I could not speak. My mistress looked questioningly into my face. "Do you know where it is, Fanny?" — "No — yes — no, indeed, Ma'am, no." — "Fanny, Fanny! I am sure you are not speaking the truth; there is something wrong — you *do* know something about it." And she looked fixedly on my face. I became redder still, but did not answer. "Where is it? what is become of it?" — "Indeed, I have had nothing to do with the loss of that book." — "To do with the loss? Then you allow that you do know that it is lost? How can you know this without having something to do with it?" — "Oh! pray, Ma'am, pray, pray ask the nurse." — "The nurse! what can she possibly have to do with the loss of that book?" Again I was silent. The bell was rung, and the nurse ordered to come down. A glance at her face told me that she knew what was going on. "Nurse," said my mistress, "Fanny asks me to go to you to account for the loss of a book which has been missing for some days out of this room. Do you know anything

about it?" — "I, Ma'am!" said the nurse, pretending to be very much surprised. "Yet I can't say that I know nothing about a book that *was* in this room." Then turning to me — "Did you not put it back again? you know very well that I threatened to tell mistress about it; and I'm very sorry, now, that I did not tell her."

The only word I could say was, "Nurse!"

"I am sure, Ma'am," said the nurse, "I should have been very sorry to say anything against her — and if you had not found her out, I should not have told about her. She is but young, Ma'am, and may improve — but, indeed, Ma'am, never in my life did I see a young girl tell a lie with such a face of innocence." I was bursting with shame and vexation. "May I speak, Ma'am? Oh! pray hear me — it was not I: it was *she* who lost the book. Do let me speak, Ma'am; pray let me tell you —" — "No, you shall have no inducement to tell more falsehoods. I fear I shall be obliged to send you home again; I cannot have anyone with my children who tells untruths." And she pointed to the nurse to open the door for me. As she was doing so, nurse said, "She told me, Ma'am, how you had caught her reading one morning, when —" Here she shut me out and herself in.

If I had had money enough to take me to Birmingham, I believe I should not have stayed in the house an hour longer; but, how often have I been thankful that I

had not; for, if I had gone away then, nothing could ever have cleared me in the eyes of my mistress, and I should have been disgraced for ever.

Though I had been five months in my place, I had written but two letters; one to my aunt, the other to the matron. I was never allowed a light to take up stairs, so that I had no opportunity of writing there. It was late when the servants came to bed that night; and, after having cried a great deal, I was just dropping to sleep when they came into the room. I did not sleep long. When I awoke, there was darkness in the room again, and the servants were snoring. Then all at once the thought came into my head that I would get up and write a letter to my aunt. I slipped on a few things. It was too dark for me to be able to see anything in the room, and I did not know where the candle had been put. Very much disappointed, I was preparing to get into bed again, when I remembered the lamp standing on the centre table in the inner drawing-room; that room of which I had the charge. I opened the door softly, and found my way into the drawing-room. I flamed up a match, which gave light long enough for me to find the lamp; then I flamed up another, and lighted it. The lamp gave but a dull light; all in the house was so quiet, and everything looked so dusky, that I was frightened, and went on trembling more than before. There was paper in the case before me, and

there were pens in the inkstand, but I never thought of using *those*. My own paper and pens were under the tray of my work-box, and that was in the kitchen. The lamp was not too large to be easily carried; so, taking it up with care, I went into the kitchen. The two cats on the hearth roused up when I opened the door. One rushed out and began to mew loudly. How frightened I was! I waited, hoping the cats might settle again; but they began mewling louder than ever, looking up to my face, and then rubbing themselves against the meat screen. I was sure that they smelt something that they wanted me to give them; so I went towards the meat screen to see what it was. There I saw a hand-basket, and something wrapped up in a cloth. Pushing the meat screen cautiously aside, I lifted the basket out. Within I found a medley of things that would have puzzled wiser heads than mine to know how they could come together. There was a thick slice of uncooked veal, two sausages, a slice of raw salmon, some green pease, and seven new potatoes, half a pot of raspberry jam, a nutmeg, and half a cucumber. I did not dare to untie the bundle — which was folded up very carefully — but I could feel bits of candles, and a basin among the oddments it seemed to contain. I put the basket quickly down again. The cats had been mewling about me all this time. At length I did contrive to escape. I had reached the drawing-room,

placed the lamp on the table, when I saw the two bits of burnt matches which I had forgotten to pick up, and which might have left traces of my wanderings. There was another bit somewhere. In my gladness to have remembered this, I moved the lamp quickly, and in carrying it towards the floor, I knocked the glass against the edge of the table; it fell to shivers, and the light was extinguished. What was to be done? Nothing: there was nothing to be done but to leave things just as they were, and to creep into bed again.

In the morning I hurried down, fearful lest any of the servants should chance to go into the drawing-room before I had picked up the broken glass. I opened the shutters, and soon found that the shattered glass was not all the injury that had been done. There was lamp-oil on the beautiful carpet! There seemed no end to my troubles.

"Broken the lamp-glass!" said the cook, as I passed through the kitchen with the broken bits of glass; "what ever will you do?" — "I can do nothing but tell mistress." — "Then I'll tell you what to do; take my advice, and deny it." — "Deny what?" — "Why, that you've broken the lamp-glass." — "What! tell my mistress a lie? how can you give me such wicked advice?" — "Well; it's no business of mine," said the Cook; "if you won't tell her a lie, I'll tell her the truth." I determined, however, to speak

first. I could not go about my usual work till I had spoken to my mistress; and yet, when I heard the dining-room door open, and knew that she would be coming up, I ran out of the room, and went up stairs; my courage failed me, and I hardly dared to go down again. From the top of the stairs I saw her go into the room, and I saw the cook following her. I expected every moment to be called. Soon the door opened, and the cook came out. I heard her say, distinctly, "Indeed, Ma'am, I'm afraid she'll turn out badly; but I've done what I can to make her confess." At the sound of the opening of the door, with a sudden determination, I had rushed down stairs, and was within a few steps of the room as the cook came out. On seeing me, she shut the door quickly, and turned quite red; then, speaking in a voice on purpose for my mistress to hear, she said, "What! have you been listening?" I made no answer; but went into the room.

There was an expression of displeasure on the face of my mistress as she looked at me. She asked, "How did you break the lamp-glass? Tell me the truth — for though I may pardon the accident, I will not pardon any falsehood about it."

I begged that I might tell her everything, and that I might begin from the day when I came to my place. I did so. I told her all, and very much in the same way that I have just been writing it

now. She listened to me with great attention, and at parts of what I told her, I could see her countenance change very much indeed. When I had done, she said, "Fanny, you have told me that which has shocked me very much. I can say nothing further to you till I have spoken to Mr. Morgan; meantime you must be silent, and go on as usual."

Mr. Morgan was at that time from home, and not expected for some days. Meanwhile, Mrs. Morgan had missed several bottles of wine from the cellar. She had a distinct knowledge of three bottles that were not in their places.

The morning after his arrival he did not go to London as usual. He and my mistress were talking together in the study for a long time. I knew well what they were talking about, and so flurried did I feel, that I could hardly get on with my work. At length I met mistress as she was going up stairs. She said she was coming to bid me go into the study; and her manner was so kind that I obeyed her without fear. My master, too, spoke very kindly to me. I found that my mistress had written to tell him what had been passing at home in his absence, and that he, chancing to be at Dudley, which is only a short distance from Birmingham, had gone there to make further inquiry about me; that he had been at the school, had seen the matron, and had also seen my aunt. All that he had heard about me had satisfied him, and convinced him that

what I had told my mistress was nothing but the truth. "Is this your handkerchief, Fanny?" said my master, taking up one from a side table. "Yes, Sir, it is," I said, unfolding it, "and here is my name marked; it was given to me by a favourite little schoolfellow, and I feared I had lost it." — "Where do you think I found this handkerchief, Fanny?" — "Indeed, Sir, I can't tell; but, thank you, Sir, for I am so glad it is found." — "I found it in the wine-cellar." I must have looked very much alarmed, for my mistress said kindly, — "Don't look so frightened, Fanny," My master rang the bell: it was answered by Mary Wild. "Stay here," he said; "and, Fanny, go and tell the nurse to come down." When the nurse entered, he rang the bell again. No one came. Indeed, there was no one to come but the cook; and that not being *her* bell, she did not think of answering it. "Shall I tell her, Sir?" said Mary Wild, who, as well as the nurse, now beginning to suspect something was wrong, turned very pale. "No!" said my master, angrily, "no one shall leave the room." Just then the door opened, and the cook entered. The plausible smooth face she had put on was gone in an instant, on seeing what was the state of things. After a moment's silence, he began: "This handkerchief," he said, "though marked with Fanny's name, was not put in the wine-cellar by her." He looked sternly at the cook — "Silence!" he said,

to the cook, when she tried to speak. He then went on: "If the three bottles of wine stolen out of the cellar are still in the house, they *shall* be found — here is a search warrant, and at the door is a policeman, ready to enforce its execution. There is no escape, and in confession is the best chance of mercy." Mary Wild looked at the cook. I shall never forget that woman's face at that moment. She seemed choking with feelings that she tried to hide, and uncertain what it would be the best for her to do; she went at last towards the door, and suddenly opening it, was rushing out of the room and up stairs. "Stop!" cried my master, following her. — "I must go," she said, "I am ill. This sudden shock — to think that I — that it should come to this — to be suspected." — And then she screamed, and tried to throw herself into a fit; but the fit would not come. Mr. Morgan said, "You had better be quiet, and submit quietly to what you cannot escape from." — "I will," she screamed out; "I have nothing to fear — I am innocent; only let me go up stairs; only let me have a few minutes to —" — "Not an instant," said my master. He then opened the window, and called to the policeman, who had been waiting in the garden. The boxes of each of the servants were examined. In the cook's box was found two of the bottles, besides many things belonging to my mistress — cambric pocket-handkerchiefs, chamber-towels, silk-

stockings, and many other articles, marked with the names of visitors who had been staying in the house. Folded up in some crumpled bits of paper, and put into the sleeve of an old gown, was a silver fork, that had been lost more than a year ago, and that mistress had supposed to have been stolen by the housemaid who had lived there before Mary Wild came. In the nurse's box were several things that looked very unlikely to be her own, but they did not belong to mistress. In a corner of the nursery cupboard was the third bottle of wine; that also had been opened. In Mary Wild's box there was nothing to excite suspicion.

When the examination was over, master gave the cook in charge to the policeman. The nurse was told to leave the house within an hour. She would have had much to say, but master would not hear her.

A month's notice was given to Mary Wild. I was glad of it; for though I knew that she had entered into many of the wicked cook's deceptions, there was something about her that made me think she would have been good, if she had not been under such evil influence. All had been so sudden, that I almost fancied it had been a dream. For a few days we went on without other servants, and I thought things had never been so comfortable as they were during this time; but Mary Wild was taken so very ill, that a doctor was sent for. She became

worse and worse, and I scarcely ever left her. In her delirium she would talk about things that had passed between the cook and herself; and though she did not know what she was saying, I felt sure that what she said *had been*. A very long time she was ill; then a sudden change took place; and she was out of danger. Poor thing! how quiet, and patient, and sorrowful she was; and how grateful for everything that was done for her! Mistress was so much touched by the many signs of sorrow Mary had shown, that she allowed her to remain in her place. Though I was so young, only just seventeen, my mistress, knowing that I was fond of the children, trusted them to my care. She engaged another nurse for three months to "put me in the way." At the end of that time she sent to the school for another girl to fill the place which had been mine. Very great was my delight to find that she was the one who had been my most favourite schoolfellow; the very girl who had given me the handkerchief.

The cook was committed for trial; her sentence was six months' imprisonment. What became of the nurse I never knew.

THE GREAT CONVOCATION OF POULTRY.

"DEAR me!" said a lady, journeying by railway towards the capital of cocks and hens, "what a number of fowls they must keep

in this small village! And yet, although I never heard such a crowing," she continued, peering out at the carriage window, "I do not see any of the crows."

At the next station, another small place, the gallinaceous chorus increased, as if a horde of wild chanticleers, yelling the warhoop of their tribe, had surrounded the train, with the fierce determination of putting every passenger to the spur.

"*What a country for poultry!*" broke from a bundle of green coat and scarlet comforter, which was huddled up in a corner of the carriage.

"Pretty well. But the cackling and crowing we hear are from Norfolk and Suffolk birds," remarked a gentleman of strong agricultural aspect. "Why, I've got a matter of sixty of the Cochin-Chinese breed for the Show; beauties! — some of 'em up to twelve or thirteen pound apiece."

A clerical-looking gentleman eagerly inquired, "Indeed! How heavy?"

"A dozen pound, full weight!" The clergyman groaned, "Then I shall lose the medal."

The glass roof of Bingley Hall, Birmingham, covers an area of an acre and a quarter. The hall is divided into five compartments, the largest being in the centre. To the separate space on the left, the Cochin-China and other cocks (to the number of nine hundred and sixty-six), together with countless heads of poultry from all parts of England, had con-

verged, by the day following that on which we arrived by the train. The remainder of the hall was allotted to a show of cattle, sheep, and pigs.

A little before nine, three or four knots of gentlemen, not exactly with Birmingham faces, and evidently having something on their minds, knocked at the front entrance. The door was cautiously set ajar by a determined policeman; the strangers slipped in, and the official instantly bolted the door after them. Despite the policeman's strongest precautions, however, your reporter slipped in with the last member of this secret society; whose secretary, the moment they entered, delivered to each a small purple-covered manuscript, inscribed with the words, "Judges' List." This was filled principally with numbers and dates up and down the pages. Each then drew his pocket-pencil and a loose piece of paper, and all walked, attended by the secretary, to the compartment where a number of large black fowls were ranged in pens, each pen having a neat wire netting in front.

"Now for the Spanish," said the brownest of the judges; "let us make an end of them." This harsh determination was almost literally fulfilled; for the whole party kept walking up and down before the terrified black fowls — sometimes separately, sometimes in twos and threes, sometimes altogether — making marks upon paper, looking into their little books, poking

the fowls with their pencils, making them start by thumps on the netting, and teasing the poor things to such an extent that the Animals' Friend Society might have asked what they meant by it. After a while, they seemed to make up their minds to some conclusion. Each entered a note or two in his own little book; the secretary took it down in his big book; and they all turned their backs at once on the specimens with which they had just been so completely absorbed.

"Here are the next gentlemen; we've no time to lose. A thousand and fifty-six lots to pass judgment on." More walking before cases; more "making off;" more poking with fingers and pencils; more pinching of backs and peering at feathers; more fluttering of birds; constant retiring of judges into small groups, and mysterious whisperings about red, blue, and white ribbons, medals, and "honourable mentions;" the mysterious gentlemen passing from class to class, from pen to pen, from bird to bird, until their eyes were so bleared, and their ears so pierced with the barn-door chromatics of one thousand nine hundred and seventy-one hens, besides countless cocks, that it is only wonderful how they could distinguish ducks from geese, or fowls from feathers. As a diversion, for variety's sake, they now and then called for a man with a weighing-machine, ordered a triumphant cock to be taken from his pen, and to be laid, with his legs tied, in the scale,

Huge geese were precipitated into a pillow-case, and suspended from steelyards: select parties, of a drake and three ducks, were huddled without apology into one sack, and, after remaining there a few minutes, as unceremoniously turned out again. All day long these varied sports were continued; at the end of about eleven hours, the judges simultaneously shut up their little books, and the secretary ran away with his big book, exclaiming, "To press!" The mysterious conclave then turned to each other, raised their hats, bowed, as if they had accomplished some great feat, and departed.

They were not, however, allowed to depart in peace. Although the evening had far advanced, a crowd of eager inquirers besieged the door of Bingley Hall. These were Exhibitors, whose anxiety would not keep until the next morning. Their chorus was nearly as loud and quite as varied as that of their own poultry.

"Would you be so kind to tell me what Number Nine hundred and ninety-nine, Class X., has got?" The good-natured arbiter turns over the leaves of his book, and is obliged to answer, "Nothing!" "And what Five hundred and one?" "A blank." "Then, Number Eighty two?" "Again a blank." "And, if you please," (in despair) "Number Thousand and four?" "I am sorry to tell you, still blank." The querist nearly takes the skin off the nose of the judge with the sharpness of the tone in which he says "Thank'ee, Sir!"

Another catechist comes into play. "May I take the liberty to ask about Number Fifty-seven, Class D.?" "First prize, and extra medal." Catechist bolts away instanter. A faint cry of "hooray!" is wafted over the heads of the crowd.

Another still succeeds. "Anything for Three hundred, Class V.?" "Blank." "And Number Eleven hundred and twenty?" "Extra third prize. Are you content?" "Y-e-s! yes! I think I ought to be content; but still—" Objection drowned in the clamour of a hundred voices, asking twice five hundred questions.

On Tuesday the aspect of affairs was different: no need, then, to tap at a locked door, and slip past the policeman sidewise. Open, Sesame! The feathered recluses visitable on the small payment of half-a-crown, this being the "private view," consisting of a select private party of a few thousands.

The mammalia have their attractions; but the tide of the throng decidedly sets in towards the oviparous department. Admiration of various degrees is expressed in every variety of exclamation. "Exquisite!" "Slap-up!" "Wonderful!" "Stunning!" "Be-a-u-tiful!" But the most intelligible commendation was that in the Report of the "Midland Counties Herald:"—"The game fowls, as heretofore, were in wonderful variety. Every one knows how handsome are the males of these breeds; but the excellent arrangements of the Exhibition

Committee permitted a close inspection of the peculiar elegance of the hen-birds. There they stood ranged, in many-tinted plumage, a troop of lovely vixens, petulant and furious, not merely *looking* as if each one would eat up a rival, but in not a few cases actually beginning to do so, to the annoyance of the attendants, who have to act as poultry police, and keep the Queen's peace among the fowls. One scarcely knew which most to admire in this department, whether the dainty Worcestershire Piles, the gorgeous Black-breasted Reds, the harmonious Duck-winged Greys, or the swarthy Birchen Greys and Blacks, looking very like imps disguised in half or entire mourning. I needed little imagination to supply the demoniac fire to flash from out their eyes and nostrils."

The competing lots of Cochin-China fowls, one hundred and fifty-four in number, were the grand objects of attraction and discussion. The excitement they caused among persons who attend to such things is barely credible. The political convulsions of France, the future of Europe, the downfall or the established empire of Louis Napoleon, were trifling matters, not worth speculating upon. — "How much do the best Cochin-Chinas weigh?" — "I will tell you, Sir, on authority which you may trust implicitly. There are, you see, two first prizes given for a cock and three hens, running each other neck and neck; but Mr. Andrews's are young birds,

not so substantial as they will be. Mr. Sturgeon's pen are more mature, and weigh thus: cock, eleven pound two ounces; hen, nine pound; ditto, eight pound ten ounces; ditto, eight pound five ounces. He has several cockerels here weighing more than ten pound apiece. I am told they make magnificent capons. Indeed, that gentleman, and Mr. Punchard, of Haverhill in Suffolk, seem to be doing for Cochin-China fowls what Bakewell did for the Leicester sheep, and Ellman for the south-downs — make them perfect in their way. The latter gentleman, in the course of 1851, has obtained from thirty-five hens *and their progeny* something like six thousand eggs! These creatures are adapted to make most prolific colonizers. There are some chickens of the second generation *this* season. They certainly look a little like subjects for the Foundling Hospital in their semi-nudity — a friend of mine knits polka jackets for hers — fact! — but the circumstance is curious, and I could show you even more strange, yet authentic, statements."

A glance at the Catalogue shows the value set upon these treasures. By the rules of the Society, every pen must have a price put upon it. The amount is unlimited; and what is thought a prohibitory valuation can of course be made. But, if the price be offered, the sale must take place. Last year, a gentleman ticketed a cock and hen that he wished should return

home, after the Show, five pounds. To his surprise, they were bought. After this, it is not surprising to see lots of choice stock birds estimated at the figures of sixty, or even one hundred pounds. It was believed at Birmingham, that the actual saleable value of the poultry would buy all the cattle, sheep, and pigs in the Show.

On the market-day, Thursday, the popularity of the pursuit was manifest. And it has the advantage of being open to all classes of society. Any one raised above poverty can rear a few fowls; the choicest specimens are not more expensive to keep, than the ugliest mongrels; so the cottager may here enter the lists with the consort of his sovereign, and perhaps carry away the prize. During the four exhibition days, the aristocrat and the plebeian seemed equally delighted with the display, and equally anxious to take the lead another year. Ladies of high degree, ladies of low degree, and ladies of no degree at all, were astonished and pleased. Such a sight they had never seen before.

It is impossible to shut one's eyes to the intense symptoms which show the *rapid increase* of the poultry-mania. For many years it has been the leisure amusement of the humbler classes in the north and west of England; it now is become a fashionable hobby. Squires and ladies, lords and a prince, send flocks of feathered claimants, with powers of attorney, to get a silver medal, if they can. Perhaps the most aristocratic poultry classes

at Birmingham were the geese and the turkeys; in which, however, they were headed by the Reverend John Robinson, and Mr. E. W. Wilmot, respectively. They will try to succeed better another year. Lady Calthorpe sent the best pair of Guinea fowls of the good old-fashioned sort. It follows, that prices hitherto unheard-of are given for choice specimens. Mr. Sturgeon cheerfully paid ten pounds for a white China cock and hen. Two gentlemen from a southern county bought, to share between them, a pen of six chickens for twenty pounds! What will their ladies say to it when they get home? A fancier, of the medical profession, purchased a broken-winged pullet for four pounds, on the chance of curing her.

Poultry associations are starting up suddenly in various and distant parts of the country; no doubt on the principle, "Light your fire at both ends, and the middle will take care of itself." Thus, Penzance shoots out a ray reflected from Birmingham; and, to the spark which (it is whispered) is smouldering at Salisbury, Halifax already responds by a steady blaze; though as *this* is to be a peripatetic school, annually wandering to and fro throughout Yorkshire, envious associations may style it a Will o' the Wisp. We watch the progress of poultry with great curiosity. It almost looks as if the old tulipomania were about to have a modern rival.

A CURIOUS DANCE ROUND A CURIOUS TREE.

ON the 13th day of January, 1750 — when the corn that grew near Moorfields was ground on the top of Windmill Hill, “Fensbury;” when Bethlehem Hospital was “a dry walk for loiterers,” and a show; when lunatics were chained, naked, in rows of cages that flanked a promenade, and were wondered and jeered at through iron bars by London loungers — Sir Thomas Ladbroke the banker, Bonnel Thornton the wit, and half-a-dozen other gentlemen, met together to found a new asylum for the insane. Towards this object they put down, before separating, one guinea each. In a year from that time the windmill had been given to the winds, and on its ancient site, there stood a hospital for the gratuitous treatment of the insane poor.

With the benevolence which thus originated an additional madhouse, was mixed, as was usual in that age, a curious degree of unconscious cruelty. Coercion for the outward man, and rabid physicking for the inward man, were then the specifics for lunacy, Chains, straw, filthy solitude, darkness, and starvation; jalap, syrup of buckthorn, tartarised antimony, and ipecacuanha administered every spring and fall in fabulous doses to every patient, whether well or ill; spinning in whirligigs, corporal punishment, gagging, “continued intoxication;” nothing was too wildly ex-

travagant, nothing too monstrously cruel to be prescribed by mad-doctors. It was their monomania; and, under their influence, the directors of Lunatic Asylums acted. In other respects these physicians were grave men, of mild dispositions, and — in their ample-flapped, ample-cuffed coats, with a certain gravity and air of state in the skirts; with their large buttons and gold-headed canes, their hair-powder and ruffles — were men of benevolent aspects. Imagine one of them turning back his lace and tightening his wig to supply a maniac who *would* keep his mouth shut, with food or physic. He employed a flat oval ring, with a handle to it. “The head being placed between the knees of the operator, the patient, blinded and properly secured, an opportunity is watched. When he opens his mouth to speak, the instrument is thrust in and allows the food or medicine to be introduced without difficulty. A sternutatory of any kind” (say a pepper-castor of cayenne, or half an ounce of rappee) “always forces the mouth open, in spite of the patient’s determination to keep it shut.” “In cases of great fury and violence,” says the amiable practitioner from whom I quote, “the patient should be kept in a dark room, confined by one leg, with metallic manacles on the wrist; the skin being less liable to be injured,” — here the Good Doctor becomes especially considerate and mild, — the skin being less liable to be injured by

the friction of polished metal than by that of linen or cotton."

These practitioners of old, would seem to have been, without knowing it, early homœopathists; their motto must have been, *Similia similibus curantur*; they believed that the most violent and certain means of driving a man mad, were the only hopeful means of restoring him to reason. The inside of the new hospital, therefore, even when, in 1782, it was removed, under the name of "Saint Luke's," from Windmill Hill to its present side in the Old Street Road, must have appeared, to the least irrational new patient, like a collection of chambers of horrors. What sane person indeed, seeing, on his entrance into any place, gyves and manacles (however highly polished) yawning for his ankles and wrists; swings dangling in the air, to spin him round like an impaled cockchafer; gags and strait-waist-coats ready at a moment's notice to muzzle and bind him; would be likely to retain the perfect command of his senses? Even now, an outside view of Saint Luke's Hospital is gloomy enough; and, when on that cold, misty, cheerless afternoon which followed Christmas Day, I looked up at the high walls, and saw, grimly peering over them, its upper stories and dismal little iron-bound windows, I did not ring the porter's bell (albeit I was only a visitor, and free to go, if I would, without ringing it at all) in the most cheerful frame of mind.

How came I, it may be asked,

on the day after Christmas Day, of all days in the year, to be hovering outside Saint Luke's, after dark, when I might have betaken myself to that jocund world of Pantomime, where there is no affliction or calamity that leaves the least impression; where a man may tumble into the broken ice, or dive into the kitchen fire, and only be the droller for the accident; where babies may be knocked about and sat upon, or choked with gravy spoons, in the process of feeding, and yet no Coroner be wanted, nor anybody made uncomfortable; where workmen may fall from the top of a house to the bottom, or even from the bottom of a house to the top, and sustain no injury to the brain, need no hospital, leave no young children; where every one, in short, is so superior to all the accidents of life, though encountering them at every turn, that I suspect this to be the secret (though many persons may not present it to themselves) of the general enjoyment which an audience of vulnerable spectators, liable to pain and sorrow, find in this class of entertainment.

Not long before the Christmas Night in question, I had been told of a patient in Saint Luke's, a woman of great strength and energy, who had been driven mad by an infuriated ox in the streets — an inconvenience not in itself worth mentioning, for which the inhabitants of London are frequently indebted to their inestimable Corporation. She seized the

creature literally by the horns, and so, as long as limb and life were in peril, vigorously held him; but, the danger over, she lost her senses, and became one of the most ungovernable of the inmates of the asylum. Why was I there to see this poor creature, when I might have seen a Pantomimic woman gored to any extent by a Pantomimi ox, at any height of ferocity, and have gone home to bed with the comforting assurance that she had rather enjoyed it than otherwise?

The reason of my choice was this. I had received a notification that on that night there would be, in Saint Luke's, "a Christmas Tree for the Patients." And further, that the "usual fortnightly dancing" would take place before the distribution of the gifts upon the tree. So there I was, in the street, looking about for a knocker and finding none.

There was a line of hackney cabriolets by the dead wall; some of the drivers, asleep; some, vigilant; some, with their legs not inexpressive of "Boxing," sticking out of the open doors of their vehicles, while their bodies were reposing on the straw within. There were flaming gas-lights, oranges, oysters, paper lanterns, butchers and grocers, bakers and public-houses, over the way; there were omnibuses rattling by; there were ballad-singers, street cries, street passengers, street beggars, and street music; there were cheap theatres within call, which you would do better to be at some

pains to improve, my worthy friends, than to shut up — for, if you will not have them with your own consent at their best, you may be sure that you *must* have them, without it, at their worst; there were wretched little chapels too, where the officiating prophets certainly were not inspired with grammar; there were homes, great and small, by the hundred thousand, east, west, north, and south; all the busy ripple of sane life (or of life, as sane as it ever is) came murmuring on from far away, and broke against the blank walls of the Madhouse, like a sea upon a desert shore.

Abandoning further search for the non-existent knocker, I discovered and rang the bell, and gained admission into Saint Luke's — through a stone courtyard and a hall, adorned with wreaths of holly and like seasonable garniture. I felt disposed to wonder how it looked to patients when they were first received, and whether they distorted it to their own wild fancies, or left it a matter of fact. But, as there was time for a walk through the building before the festivities began, I discarded idle speculation and followed my leader.

Into a long, long gallery: on one side, a few windows; on the other, a great many doors leading to sleeping cells. Dead silence — not utter solitude; for, outside the iron cage enclosing the fireplace between two of the windows, stood a motionless woman. The fire cast a red glare upon the walls,

upon the ceiling, and upon the floor, polished by the daily friction of many feet. At the end of the gallery, the common sitting-room. Seated on benches around another caged fire-place, several women: all silent, except one. She, sewing a mad sort of seam, and scolding some imaginary person. (Taciturnity is a symptom of nearly every kind of mania, unless under pressure of excitement. Although the whole lives of some patients are passed together in the same apartment, they are passed in solitude; there is no solitude more complete.) Forms and tables, the only furniture. Nothing in the rooms to remind their inmates of the world outside. No domestic articles to occupy, to interest, or to entice the mind away from its malady. Utter vacuity. Except the scolding woman sewing a purposeless seam, every patient in the room either silently looking at the fire, or silently looking on the ground — or rather through the ground, and at Heaven knows what, beyond.

It was a relief to come to a work-room; with coloured prints over the mantel-shelf, and china shepherdesses upon it; furnished also with tables, a carpet, stuffed chairs, and an open fire. I observed a great difference between the demeanour of the occupants of this apartment and that of the inmates of the other room. They were neither so listless nor so sad. Although they did not, while I was present, speak much, they worked with earnestness and dili-

gence. A few noticed my going away, and returned my parting salutation. In a niche — not in a room — but at one end of a cheerless gallery — stood a pianoforte, with a few ragged music-leaves upon the desk. Of course, the music was turned upside down.

Several such galleries on the "female side;" all exactly alike. One, set apart for "boarders" who are incurable; and, towards whose maintenance their friends are required to pay a small weekly sum. The experience of this asylum did not differ, I found, from that of similar establishments, in proving that insanity is more prevalent among women than among men. Of the eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine inmates, Saint-Luke's Hospital has received in the century of its existence, eleven thousand one hundred and sixty-two have been women, and seven thousand five hundred and eighty-seven, men. Female servants are, as is well known, more frequently afflicted with lunacy than any other class of persons. The table, published in the Directors' Report, of the condition in life of the one hundred and seven female inmates admitted in 1850, sets forth that while, under the vague description of "wife of labourer" there were only nine admissions, and under the equally indefinite term "housekeeper," no more than six; there were of women servants, twenty-four.

I passed into one of the galleries on the male side. Three men,

engaged at a game of bagatelle; another patient kneeling against the wall apparently in deep prayer; two, walking rapidly up and down the long gallery arm-in-arm, but, as usual, without speaking together; a handsome young man deriving intense gratification from the motion of his fingers as he played with them in the air; two men standing like pillars before the fire-cage; one man, with a newspaper under his arm, walking with great rapidity from one end of the corridor to the other, as if engaged in some important mission which admitted of not a moment's delay. The only furniture in the common sitting-room not peculiar to a prison or a lunatic asylum of the old school, was a newspaper, which was being read by a demented publican. The same oppressive silence — except when the publican complained, in tones of the bitterest satire, against one of the keepers, or (said the publican) "attendant, as I suppose I must call him." The same listless vacuity here, as in the room occupied by the female patients. Despite the large amount of cures effected in the hospital, (upwards of sixty-nine per cent. during the past year,) testifying to the general efficacy of the treatment pursued in it, I think that, if the system of finding the inmates employment, so successful in other hospitals, were introduced into Saint Luke's, the proportion of cures would be much greater. Appended to the latest report of the charity is a table of the

weights of the new-comers, compared with the weights of the same individuals when discharged. From this, it appears that their inactivity occasions a rapid accumulation of flesh. Of thirty patients, whose average residence in the hospital extended over eleven weeks, twenty-nine had gained at the average rate of more than one pound per week, each. This can hardly be a gain of health.

On the walls of some of the sleeping cells were the marks of what looked like small alcoves, that had been removed. These indicated the places to which the chairs, which patients were made to sit in for indefinite periods, were, in the good old times, nailed. A couple of these chairs have been preserved in a lumber-room, and are hideous curiosities indeed. As high as the seat, are boxes to enclose the legs, which used to be shut in with spring bolts. The thighs were locked down by a strong cross-board, which also served as a table. The back of this cramping prison is so constructed that the victim could only use his arms and hands in a forward direction; not backward or sideways.

Each sleeping cell has two articles of furniture — a bed and a stool; the latter serving instead of a wardrobe. Many of the patients sleep in single-bedded rooms; but the larger cells are occupied by four inmates. The bedding is comfortable, and the clothing ample. On one bed-place

the clothes were folded up, and the bedding had been removed. In its stead, was a small bundle, made up of a pair of boots, a waistcoat, and some stockings. "That poor fellow," said my conductor, "died last night — in a fit."

As I was looking at the marks in the walls of the galleries, of the posts to which the patients were formerly chained, sounds of music were heard from a distance. The ball had begun, and we hurried off in the direction of the music.

It was playing in another gallery — a brown sombre place, not brilliantly illuminated by a light at either end, adorned with holly. The staircase by which this gallery was approached, was curtained off at the top, and near the curtain the musicians were cheerfully engaged in getting all the vivacity that could be got, out of their two instruments. At one end were a number of mad men, at the other, a number of mad women, seated on forms. Two or three sets of quadrille dancers were arranged down the centre, and the ball was proceeding with great spirit, but with great decorum.

There were the patients usually to be found in all such asylums, among the dancers. There was the brisk, vain, pippin-faced little old lady, in a fantastic cap — proud of her foot and ankle; there was the old-young woman, with the dishevelled long light hair, spare figure, and weird gentility; there was the vacantly-laughing girl, requiring now and then a warning finger to admonish her; there was

the quiet young woman, almost well, and soon going out. For partners, there were the sturdy bull-necked thick-set little fellow who had tried to get away last week; the wry-faced tailor, formerly suicidal, but much improved; the suspicious patient with a countenance of gloom, wandering round and round strangers, furtively eyeing them behind from head to foot, and not indisposed to resent their intrusion. There was the man of happy silliness, pleased with everything. But the only chain that made any clatter was Ladies' Chain, and there was no straiter waistcoat in company than the polka-garment of the old-young woman with the weird gentility, which was of a faded black satin, and languished through the dance with a love-lorn affability and condescension to the force of circumstances, in itself a faint reflection of all Bedlam.

Among those seated on the forms, the usual loss of social habits and the usual solitude in society, were again to be observed. It was very remarkable to see how they huddled together without communicating; how some watched the dancing with lack-lustre eyes, scarcely seeming to know what they watched; how others rested weary heads on hands, and moped; how others had the air of eternally expecting some miraculous visitor who never came, and looking out for some deliverances that never happened. The last figure of the set danced

out, the women-dancers instantly returned to their station at one end of the gallery, the men-dancers repaired to *their* station at the other; and all were shut up within themselves in a moment.

The dancers were not all patients. Among them, and dancing with right good will, were attendants, male and female — pleasant-looking men, not at all realising the conventional idea of “keepers” — and pretty women, gracefully though not at all inappropriately dressed, and with looks and smiles as sparkling as one might hope to see in any dance in any place. Also, there were sundry bright young ladies who had helped to make the Christmas tree; and a few members of the resident-officer’s family; and, shining above them all, and shining everywhere, his wife; whose clear head and strong heart Heaven inspired to have no Christmas wish beyond this place, but to look upon it as her home, and on its inmates as her afflicted children. And may I see as seasonable a sight as that gentle Christian lady every Christmas that I live, and leave its counterpart in as fair a form in many a nook and corner of the world, to shine, like a star in a dark spot, through all the Christmases to come!

The tree was in a bye room by itself, not lighted yet, but presently to be displayed in all its glory. The porter of the Institution, a brisk young fellow with no end of dancing in him, now proclaimed a song. The announce-

ment being received with loud applause, one of the dancing sisterhood of attendants sang the song, which the musicians accompanied. It was very pretty, and we all applauded to the echo, and seemed (the mad part of us I mean) to like our share in the applause prodigiously, and to take it as a capital point, that we were led by the popular porter. It was so great a success that we very soon called for another song, and then we danced a country-dance, (Porter perpetually going down the middle and up again with Weird-gentility) until the quaint pictures of the Founders, hanging in the adjacent committee-chamber, might have trembled in their frames.

The moment the dance was over, away the porter ran, not in the least out of breath, to help light up the tree. Presently it stood in the centre of its room, growing out of the floor, a blaze of light and glitter; blossoming in that place (as the story goes of the American aloe) for the first time in a hundred years. O shades of Mad Doctors with laced ruffles and powdered wigs, O shades of patients who went mad in the only good old times to be mad or sane in, and who were therefore physicked, whirligigged, chained, handcuffed, beaten, cramped, and tortured, look from

Wherever in your sightless substances,
You wait —

on this outlandish weed in the degenerate garden of Saint Luke’s!

To one coming freshly from outer life, unused to such scenes, it was a very sad and touching spectacle, when the patients were admitted in a line, to pass round the lighted tree, and admire. I could not but remember with what happy, hopefully-flushed faces, the brilliant toy was associated in my usual knowledge of it, and compare them with the worn cheek, the listless stare, the dull eye raised for a moment and then confusedly dropped, the restless eagerness, the moody surprise, so different from the sweet expectancy and astonishment of children, that came in melancholy array before me. And when the sorrowful procession was closed by "Tommy," the favourite of the house, the harmless old man, with a giggle and a chuckle and a nod for everyone, I think I would have rather that Tommy had charged at the tree like a Bull, than that Tommy had been, at once so childish and so dreadfully un-childlike.

We all went out into the gallery again after this survey, and the dazzling fruits of the tree were taken from their boughs, and distributed. The porter, an undeveloped genius in stage-management and mastership of ceremonies, was very active in the distribution, blew all the whistles, played all the trumpets, and nursed all the dolls. That done, we had a wonderful concluding dance, compounded of a country dance and galopade, during which all the popular

couples were honoured with a general clapping of hands, as they galoped down the middle; and the porter in particular was overwhelmed with plaudits. Finally, we had God Save the Queen, with the whole force of the company; solo parts by the female attendant with the pretty voice who had sung before; chorus led, with loyal animation, by the porter. When I came away, the porter, surrounded by bearers of trays, and busy in the midst of the forms, was delivering out mugs and cake, like a banker dealing at a colossal round game. I daresay he was asleep before I got home; but I left him in that stage of social briskness which is usually described among people who are at large, as "beginning to spend the evening."

Now, there is doubtless a great deal that is mournfully affecting in such a sight. I close this little record of my visit with the statement that the fact is so, because I am not sure but that many people expect far too much. I have known some, after visiting the noblest of our Institutions for this terrible calamity, express their disappointment at the many deplorable cases they had observed with pain, and hint that, after all, the better system could do little. Something of what it can do, and daily does, has been faintly shadowed forth, even in this article. Wonderful things have been done for the Blind, and for the Deaf and Dumb; but, the utmost is necessarily far inferior

to the restoration of the senses of which they are deprived. To lighten the affliction of insanity by all human means, is not to restore the greatest of the Divine gifts; and those who devote themselves to the task do not pretend that it is. They find their sustenance and reward in the substitution of humanity for brutality, kindness for maltreatment, peace for raging fury; in the acquisition of love instead of hatred; and in the knowledge that, from such treatment, improvement, and hope of final restoration will come, if such hope be possible. It may be little to have abolished from mad-houses all that is abolished, and to have substituted all that is substituted. Nevertheless, reader, if you can do a little in any good direction—do it. It will be much, some day.

THE PEASANTS OF BRITISH INDIA.

THE annals of our kingdom in the East have been written in blood with a pen of gold. They read very like stories from the Arabian Nights Entertainments; and thus many people indulge in the belief that, in India, the population is exclusively composed of caliphs, nabobs, jugglers, rajahs, bankers, fakeers, nautch girls, Bramin priests, dacoits, and magicians. The name of India is intimately connected with all sorts of wealth and luxury. There are very few, indeed, in this country who do not link the

name of Indian merchant or banker with unlimited riches. An old East Indian civil servant is usually termed a "Nabob;" and as to "John Company" of Leadenhall Street — that mysterious, greyheaded old gentleman, who makes and unmakes rajahs and sultans as coolly and rapidly as children make dirt-pies in our streets — he is looked upon as a sort of English Vishnu — a concentration of the Prime Minister, the Bank of England, the Horse Guards, and the Admiralty. The streets and alleys in that wonderful land are currently reported to be paved with real philosophers' stones, transmuting everything they touch into the best guineagold. Perhaps, of late, the auriferous reputation of India Proper has been somewhat perilled by the diggings in California and Australia; but then folks shake their heads, and tell you, that in the "Oriental East Indies" there are neither Yankees nor convicts, neither Lynch law nor bush law.

It is, perhaps, an ungracious task to dispel this glorious vision. But the truth must be told. Our Indian empire can only be likened to the famed "apple of the desert;" — beauty and promise to the eye; but bitterness and ashes to the taste.

Travellers have found Sheffield knives selling in Bokhara; grey tweeds from Scotland in the Cabool bazaars, and Birmingham wares in Cashmere villages. I have stumbled upon an empty blacking-bottle of Day and Mar-

tin, in a miserable Indian mudhut. I have found, adorning the walls of a Buddhist temple, printed cotton handkerchiefs covered with political caricatures, from Manchester: I have seen the reception hall of a Kandian chief graced by one of Rowland's picturesque Macassar labels, with a dark lady combing uncommonly long black hair. But it by no means follows that because all these knives, and cottons and wares, are exchanged for rich spices, costly silks, and precious gums, that the country is prosperous, or that its trade is progressively remunerative. Neither is it a matter of course that "John Company" is a solvent old gentleman, in spite of his armies, his fleets, and his captive rajahs.

The fact is that the present yearly income of the Honourable East India Company falls far short of its annual expenditure: * that the trade between this country and its Indian possessions is not greater than it was ten years since: that the inhabitants of those countries consume, per head, not more than one-eighth of the quantity of British goods taken by the population of the South American states: and, moreover, that for some years past, the trade between Great Britain and India has not been a profitable affair to shippers or to importers. During no period of the history of the world has commerce

made such rapid strides as it has within the past ten years. It is a fact so well known as to require no proof. Even the antiquated empire of the Celestials has added vastly to its external traffic. Nevertheless, the trade between Great Britain and India has remained, as nearly as possible, stationary. How is it that whilst British India, with a population of one hundred and twenty millions, takes our goods to the value of no more than six millions, two hundred and sixty-five thousand pounds, South America (Mexico excepted) and the foreign West India Islands, having but fifteen millions of inhabitants, consume British merchandise to the extent of six millions, three hundred and eighty-one thousand pounds?

When I was sojourning in the land of Indigo, and beheld the gorgeous Indian metropolis — the vast city of palaces — the luxurious style of living of its many merchant-princes and its nabob-officials; — when I saw other cities as wealthy, if not as large — when I reckoned up the fleets of richly-laden ships which day by day cast anchor in their noble ports; the piles of rare and costly merchandise with which their many wharves flowed over, — I felt incredulous of the reputed state of that most gorgeous whole. If the people, I thought, be not rich and thriving here, where then can prosperity be found? If wealth and happiness flow not from all these things, what else can make a nation great? But I had not

* The balance of expenditure over income in the year 1849 amounted to nearly a million and a half sterling.

then seen more than the outer shell of that Eastern world — the mere crust of our Indian empire.

I had occasion to journey on business affairs through the Northern provinces of Lower Bengal, and made that visit a means of judging for myself as to the real condition of the people. I had for companion a most intelligent man, one of the *uncovenanted* servants of the Company, and a first-rate linguist; so that I possessed no common advantage. The country we passed through appeared to be as fertile as it was beautiful. Few, very few miles of waste land, were visible. Every field seemed to be made to do its duty to the uttermost blade of rice, or cane of sugar; and I felt convinced that here, at any rate, prosperity smiled upon the labouring population. As we journeyed along in our slothful palanquins, side by side or lounged out the oppressive heat of the noonday in the verandah of some friendly road-side bungalow, my companion enlightened me as to the nature and condition of the various agricultural classes of that part of Hindostan.

The Indian peasantry are termed *ryots*; and between them and the *zemindars*, the great landed proprietors or renters, who are directly accountable to the government for the land-tax, are a variety of middlemen, or sub-farmers of this portion of the revenue. They are known as *talukdhars*, *durputnidars*, *mostagars*, &c., all

of whom derive a luxurious living from the oppression of the class immediately below them; and thus by the time the pressure of the tax has reached the unfortunate ryot, it has attained a weight which effectually crushes beneath it the last feeble efforts of his hopeless, heart-breaking struggles. In 1793 Lord Cornwallis completed what is known as the “permanent settlement,” extending over upwards of one hundred thousand square miles of country. By this enactment the ownership of the land was vested in the zemindars or native chiefs, who were in future to pay to government a fixed tax on the land, and be empowered in their turn to levy upon the ryots. But whilst the rate of taxation was thus fixed upon the zemindari, and most stringent and summary powers given to them to proceed against *their* renters, nothing was said as to the amount they might levy upon the ignorant and friendless ryots, who were thus given up, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of a sordid race of men. Under such a system, it is not wonderful that the Indian labourer finds himself, at the end of a year, not quite so well off as he was at the commencement. We read that when Alexander invaded India, Porus, pressed by the emergency, raised a heavy war-tax of one-fourth of the produce of the land: Britain, in a time of profound peace, exacts from her Indian subjects a tax of *one-half* their produce, and which to the

poor ryot, with the addition of extra levies at the zemindar's will, too often amounts to seventy or eighty per cent. of the fruits of his toil!

Always oppressed, ever in poverty, the ryot is compelled to seek the aid of the mahajun or native money-lender. This will frequently be the talukdhar or sub-renter, who exacts from the needy borrower whatever interest he thinks the unfortunate may be able to pay him, often at the rate of one per cent. per week. The accounts of these loans are kept by the mahajuns, who, aware of the deep ignorance of their clients, falsify their books, without fear of detection. In this way, no matter how favourable the season, how large the crop, the grasping mahajun is sure to make it appear that the *whole* is due to him; for he takes it at his own value. So far from Mr. Burke having overstated the case of the oppression of the ryots, on the trial of Warren Hastings, when he said that the tax-gatherer took from them eighteen shillings in every pound, he was really within the mark. At the conclusion of each crop-time, the grower of rice or cotton is made to appear a debtor to his superior, who thereupon — provided the ryot appears able to toil on for another season — advances more seed for sowing, and a little more rice to keep the labourer and his family from absolute starvation. But, should there be any doubt as to the health and strength of the tenant-labourer, he is mercilessly turned from his land and his mud hut, and left to die on the highway.

In addition to the multiplied taxation and usurious interest to which the Indian peasantry are subjected, they are liable to *abwabs*; irregular exactions, made upon them by every grade of middleman, up to the zemindari, and amounting, not unfrequently, to as much as the land-tax. These extortions date back to the time of the Hindu dynasty, when, however, they were comparatively light. They existed also during the Mahomedan rule. It remained for the paternal government of Englishmen to permit this evil to spread like a foul infection through the land, eating into the very body and sinews of native industry. It is true, the enactments of 1793 declare these *abwabs* to be illegal, and punishable by fines; but no one seems to heed the injunction, nor is it likely that many persons are aware of its existence. Every feast, festival, or ceremony which takes place in the land, is made an excuse for the levy of an *abwab* for the great man: the milkman has to contribute milk, the oil-maker furnishes oil, and so on through the whole population. The zemindar employs a *naib*, or accountant, who is assisted by *gomastas*, and under these latter are the *paiks*, or collecting peons; each of these worthies exacts *abwab*, or, as it is sometimes called, *hisabana*, from those below them; and all grind down

the miserable ryot to his utmost ability. So long as the toiling wretch possesses a measure of rice, a bundle of tobacco, or a yard of cloth, he is fair game for the human vultures hovering about his hut. When we know that a Bengal ryot can subsist in tolerable comfort on five or six shillings a month, and that with all his toil and care, he seldom secures enough to do more than half feed him, and frequently goes foodless for days together; — when this is known, some idea may be formed of the extent of degradation and hopeless want and misery to which a hundred millions of our fellow-creatures are exposed.

Such was the information, gleaned, on various days' journeys, from my travelling companion: it sounded strangely enough to my ear after the dazzling view I had taken of things Oriental; and, although I had no reason to doubt the accuracy of what was now told me, I felt deeply anxious to look more closely into the actual state of the Indian peasantry.

It was very shortly after the above facts had been detailed to me, that we paused in our usual morning progress to survey a very beautiful tract of wide and fertile country. We sprang from our palanquins, and mounting a small hillock, topped with luxuriant jungle trees, indulged in admiration of the lovely scenery before and below us. Valleys of rich waving rice fields stretched as far

as the eye could reach, like a vast sea of green. On either side of those fertile tracts rose gently undulating lands, on which grew many crops of motley-tinted green; and over those waved to the morning breeze the sparkling leaves of nobly timbered trees; whilst high above, the lovely azure of the sky set all in harmony, and nothing was wanting for painter or for poet. We gazed, and gazed again. What sound was that, away under the bamboo yonder? Was it some lonely bird bewailing its mate? It was so gentle, so plaintive, that it brought the tears to my eyes. It was no bird! That was a sound of human woe, or my heart would not have leapt into my throat as it did! The next moment we were both rapidly descending the little hill to trace out the sound. At the brow of the hillock, on the side opposite to that by which we had arrived, and adjoining the low rice fields, was a grove of thickly planted bamboo and mangoe trees. It seemed as cool and retired as any grotto of sylvan nymph; but, alas! not so happy within. Before us sat a little child, a Hindu girl, of slight and graceful figure, whose long jet hair curled gracefully, as though it kindly strove to hide the famine in her face. In her tiny lap there lay the head of a wan and bony corpse! As we approached the spectre, the child ceased her low cry of sorrow, but did not stir.

My companion addressed a few words to the girl, who faltered

something in reply. I caught the word "father," then hastened to our palanquins, and summoned the bearers to our aid. The body was laid quietly and silently aside, amongst a heap of moss and leaves; and then the poor weeping orphan — too faint and ill, poor child — to say or do much, shed tears upon my hand as I placed her softly on an open mat and pillow. A few of our coolies were sent off for the chief of the nearest village, and some of the peasantry to remove the body. Whilst they were gone, we gleaned from the child that her father had not tasted food for some days, but that he had saved a little rice for her, which he made her swallow in his sight: that the last handful of food was then wrapped up in her little girdle, having received it from him just as he breathed his last. She had no mother, no brothers, no sisters: famine and sickness had swept them all away. She was alone. I thought the little creature would have fainted in my arms, as she dwelt so sorrowfully upon that word — alone! We told her she was not, and should not be alone; that we would find a mother for her, and sisters too; but the child did not comprehend our meaning, and only closed her rich black eyes, and wept.

Assistance having been procured from the village adjoining, we caused the body to be removed; and, having had a litter of sticks and mats for the child, we took her with us to the next halting place at no great distance. Our chief bearer had gleaned from some of the peasantry around the brief but sad history of the child and her lost parent. He had been a Khodkhoot ryot, or resident land-holder, cultivating a rather large tract of soil under a "bamiadi pottah," or lease, for unlimited period, at a fixed jumma, or rent. By industry, the poor man had contrived to get his ground into good condition; plentiful crops were the result, and all seemed right. But the talukdhar of that zemindari was a man of subtle devices; he knew well that the regulation, No. 8 of 1793, gave him power to set aside the pottah in the local courts, if he could prove that the rate defined in it was below the general average of the district; and as to proof, witnesses could be had at all times for one rupee each, in any number. Witnesses were hired; the native amlah of the court was bribed, and the pottah set aside. From that day forward the ryot was a lost man; his rent was heavily increased, the improvements he had made were all taxed to the utmost *pice*, and he was soon forced into the unrelaxing grasp of the mahajun. Heavy interest on loans, a bad crop or two, the death of the mother of his family, and then of his two sons, all from the low fever of starvation, made him a miserable and a desperate man. At last his strength failed, and when the mahajun found him unequal to cultivate his land as he was wont, he demanded a speedy settlement of his claims. Of course

this could not be done, and the usual result followed. The ryot was expelled, sick and broken-hearted, to seek a chance home and a little charity from neighbours. He had wandered from village to village with his remaining child; and at last, finding himself at the point of death, had crawled back to die within sight of his once happy, though humble, home. He had died where he hoped, by his own rice fields; he had breathed his last under the shade of trees which his own hand had planted; there we had found him, his bony fingers still grasping a few remaining grains of the precious store of rice, which he held even in death for his poor child's meal — the last he could give her. I need hardly say the orphan was not uncared for.

The day following, I gathered equally unmistakeable proof of the misery prevailing amongst the ryots, of wretchedness and poverty, which is a bar to any attempt at improvement amongst them, and blights every bud of hope for the future. We had halted in a cool and shady dell, near which stood a small mud hut, such as one meets by scores through the cultivated districts of Bengal. I wanted a draught of water, and preferring to take it from a rippling stream close by, I left my palanquin, as did my companion. When nearer the little cabin, we perceived the owner seated by the door, staring vacantly upon the wide green fields before him. He was clad as

miserably as ryots usually are; if, indeed, a narrow slip of dirty cotton rag wound round their loins, can be called clothing. He was emaciated in the extreme, and his grim gaunt visage was rendered even more ghastly by a profusion of thickly-matted beard and hair. A few sickly, rickety-looking children were amusing themselves under the shade of some trees near the patch of rice. To our inquiry as to why he was not at work at that hour of the day, he replied that it was useless for him to work; the more he toiled the poorer he became. How so? we asked. He looked around as if fearful of being overheard, and then said in a low voice, "Mahajun takes all." We inquired why that was allowed; to which he answered, "He is rich; I am poor; what can I do?" Our conversation drew from him, by the aid most potent of some copper coins, that he had his jumma raised several times on various pretences, to say nothing of abwabs: once, when the zemindar was at a loss for an excuse, he pretended to sell his zemindari to another, who, in such a case, is always supposed and allowed to have a right to re-assess the rents of the holdings, and so the occasion was made. Yet, it is expressly stated in a Government minute, dated February 3rd, 1790, that, "whoever cultivates the land, the zemindar can receive no more than the established rent."

Native landholders, and such gentry, are much wiser in their generation than Governors-Gene-

ral, and they have for the last fifty years agreed that the aforesaid "minute" is sheer waste paper, and treat it as such accordingly. The miserable-looking ryot need not have protested as he did, that he ate but barely enough to keep him alive — his looks told the tale of starvation. Wild roots, seeds, and fruits, were their wonted meal: rice they seldom got, save during the ripening of their crops; and even then their mahajun forbade them to touch it, lest *his* claims should suffer; and so the miserable man crawled out at night, on hands and knees, and stole a scanty meal for his famished children. The mahajun, he knew, falsified all the accounts — but what could he do? Go to the courts? Poor men could do nothing there. All evidence is taken down by the *amlaho*, or native registrars: the English magistrate decides the case upon the evidence taken in writing by these men, who are notoriously bribed — and so money carries everything there. It seemed a hopeless case, indeed, for that poor ryot; and, as we left him, could but call to mind the sad fate of the Khodkhoot ryot of the previous day; and I wondered whether the Honourable Court of Directors had ever seen one of these their subjects and fellow-men, and whether they should not have one preserved for their museum in Leadenhall Street. It would form a striking and instructive object, if placed beside the mummy of a sleek, oily-skinned zemindar!

It is quite true that the above evils, in that particular shape, extend only over certain portions of India. But misery as great prevails even where "the permanent settlement" does not extend to. In the Bombay Presidency, for instance, the Government assess the lands for taxation annually. For a district of about seventy-six thousand square miles, there are twelve English collectors, who, with their assistants, are expected to value the crop on every separate plot of ground belonging to some eight millions and a half of inhabitants. Nearly all this work is at the mercy of the native assistants, who fleece the small cultivators to a fearful extent. The abomination of the corrupt *amlahs* of small courts are alike everywhere: in every part of the country the ryot is a miserable, an ignorant, and a degraded being; a helpless tool for the zemindar to use, and when worn out, to be flung aside into the nearest jungle, and there die like a wild beast!

Not many days ago, at a public distribution of prizes to young students of the Honourable Company's College, at Haileybury, about to embark for India, the deputy-chairman addressed the future rulers of our Indian empire in an eloquent and sensible speech. He told them, truly enough, of the importance of the duties they were about to enter upon; of how many million destinies they were shortly to rule over; and how much it behoved them, as good stewards, to see to the ad-

ministration of strict justice to all classes of their Indian fellow-men, down to the most humble. There have been good deputy-chairmen delivering the very same sort of well-meant, properly-punctuated orations, for the last half century; yet Indian ryots have been all the time starving, and dying, and rotting on dunghills, like so many slaughtered jackals.

Whilst the bulk of the Indian population remain thus degraded and helpless, it is worse than idle to expect them to undertake new agricultural projects. Why should those poor wretches grow cotton for our factories? What would they gain? It is a mockery to talk of giving them railroads to Bombay and Calcutta, when they have no footpath to common justice. What is steam to them, who dare not eat the very food they grow, lest the great zemindar should find one grain the less within his ample store! What need have they of cotton cloths from Manchester, or wares from Birmingham? And yet these millions, if they took but half the goods from us which South Americans consume, would want each year not less than forty millions sterling worth beyond their present purchases.

THREE AND SIXPENCE.

NOUGHTENBOROUGH is a promising city on the banks of the Salmon, surrounded by a goodly neighbourhood of fair fields and

pleasant walks, and open in all directions to clear sun and air. It is half-commercial, half-fashionable. There is a sprinkling of good families, who live respectably, and give pleasant parties without seeking to "make a dash" above their neighbours. Hence, there is sufficient demand for blanc-mange and cracker bonbons to enable a pastrycook to pick up a snug fortune in twenty years or so. Alderman Cracknell was that fortunate pastrycook. He had amassed a very pretty property; insomuch that nobody was surprised when he became the Mayor of Noughtenborough.

But Cracknell was not merely a pastrycook and a mayor: he was a conscientious and kind-hearted man. He had several children, and those who saw him heading the family procession to the old parish church on a Sunday, or reading the Bible to the same little assembly every evening before bed-time, could not but respect the steady industry that had surrounded his children with every comfort, and the still higher sentiment that directed their feelings of gratitude to its proper object. "Only a pastrycook," or "Risen from nothing," were expressions of envy he did not care a bun about.

Our Mayor gave away much that people knew of, and a great deal more that no one but the receiver ever heard of. He was liberal, also, in matters connected with church repairs; although he had not the smallest anxiety about

mediæval revivals. The one great wish he had at heart was the education of the poor. He had already built one or two schools, almost at his own expense, and he looked sharply after everybody connected with them. Every poor boy or girl in the place knew the Mayor, we might almost say, personally — a knowledge which neither the livery of an alderman nor the title of mayor had ever tended to distance.

Nor was this taste for education a mere joining in a popular cry, or the result of a desire to depress the higher classes by elevating the low; for Mr. Cracknell, in his earlier and humble capacity of assistant to the old firm of Gun & Co., Belgravia, London, had always been a seeker after a better class of knowledge than two years at a day-school could have furnished. Because his time and opportunities had been small, his employment of them had been more earnest; and, as his position gradually bettered, when he embarked, after much struggling and rigid economy, in business "on his own account," he kept increasing his application with his leisure. Hence, at the age of fifty-one the Mayor of Noughtenborough was a man of varied and useful information, as well digested as acquired, and with powers of thought and intelligence which, while they had never raised him "above his business," had made him the sought companion of many men moving in a superior class. His retirement from

business had now broken down every prejudice, even on the part of many families, who had only associated the name of Cracknell with wedding breakfasts, lent plate, and pound-cake hedgehogs.

The Mayor was not a deep linguist. The small smattering of Latin which he had picked up at Park-house "Commercial and Classical" Academy, had not been suffered to dwindle away, and he had scrambled together some French at an evening class, and had subsequently learnt to write, read, and speak that language thoroughly well. But he was an encyclopædia of general social knowledge and anecdote. Furthermore, he understood the law more perfectly than a great many of its practitioners; but on "Church Antiquities" he was tremendous. It was his pet subject, and his knowledge of the law was rather sought with reference thereunto. He was pathetic on the desecration of old cathedrals; and indignant that places destined for the worship of God should be degraded into show places for the emolument of the lay or clerical proprietors. He could not conceive why a few dozen people, crammed into a narrow, ill-warmed, ill-ventilated "choir," formed a fitting congregation in a building constructed to hold thousands. He could not help wondering why there were grand organs in many of the London churches, which were confined and ill-adapted to display

the power of the instruments; while those in many of the cathedrals were small, out of repair, and ineffective. But, like most men of business, who have made money, his grand doubts and difficulties settled upon financial points.

Although the acquirements of our Mayor had never been distinguished for

$$\sqrt[3]{3\alpha\beta+x^2}-\sqrt{1+\sqrt[3]{3y}}\div\sqrt[5]{2^3+\sqrt[5]{x}},$$

or any other of the ingenious tortuosities into which the imaginations of budding Cantabs are expanded; although the remotest idea of squaring the circle never entered his head, and even the *pons asinorum* would probably have proved as treacherous to his mental footsteps as the bridge in the Vision of Mirza; still he was a terribly skilful man at figures. At home he knew where every farthing went, and how, and to whom, and what for, and with what loss or profit. At a vestry he was equally useful. He could tell what money had been voted for such and such a purpose; and woe betide any mistakes on the part of the recipients or administrators! Hapless was the board of guardians upon whom his sarcasm, and, worse still, his minute knowledge of facts, once opened itself! Woe betide the butcher or baker whose "contract" was broken! As for luxurious parish dinners out of the funds properly belonging to the poor, Mr. Cracknell, like Molière's Mock Doctor, had changed all that.

But when Mr. Cracknell sat down to his Church history studies, the "figures" bothered him completely. Do what he would, he could not understand Church arithmetic. When Jack Miller, the collector of poor's rates, absconded, taking with him the wife of his "security," who but Cracknell first discovered, and then adjusted, the deficient money? When the Goodman's Fields charity had lain dormant, who had called upon the trustees to refund, and who had calculated the sum to be refunded, but Cracknell? No; whatever might be the matter with other people's heads, Mr. Cracknell felt that his own head, like his heart, was in the right place. Let us see what was the arithmetical difficulty that could puzzle a man whose arithmetic was the terror even of workhouse contractors and county court attorneys.

As you look from a little terrace in front of the "Line and Twine," Traddler's Hill, you see the whole city of Noughtenborough spread out before you, like a raised map, and looking very active, cheerful, populous, and well-built. There are plenty of old-fashioned houses within the town, but you cannot discriminate at this distance. The cathedral is the chief object. The spire is a grand one, and tops everything for miles and miles around, while its celestory, or long range of upper windows, relieved by light buttresses, and crowned with still lighter turrets, forms a favourite resting-place for

the eye, as it raises itself above the quiet stream of the Salmon Row, that winds round below the terrace on which we are lounging. The grey stone stands in pleasant contrast to the delicate blue of the sky, and the spire seems to direct all men's thoughts to the heaven towards which it rears its own head.

On just such a calm summer's day as is most likely to make men thankful for what they have, without grumbling about what they have not, the Mayor might be seen walking along the terrace aforesaid. It was a rare thing to see the Mayor walking alone; for although Mrs. Cracknell was rather an invalid, and seldom left home for any distance, he generally had a pretty daughter, married or unmarried, as the case might be, hanging on his arm, or else some old friend and companion in parochial or civil combats. But, on the present occasion, the Mayor was alone, and, we are sorry to say, had no companion but the uncomfortable words "THREE AND SIXPENCE."

Strange company, no doubt; and too little to harass the mind of our steady-going Mayor. Had it been an overcharge for cab-fare, he would have settled it easily enough, simply by not paying it, or by "committing" the extortioner. Had it been for a doll's bonnet, or a bottle of *bouquet de la rose*, he would only have kissed the extravagant little daughter, and thanked Heaven that he had wealth enough to purchase many

more such little luxuries for the "whole lot," as he familiarly called his family. But this "THREE AND SIXPENCE" sate heavy on his soul. It was an incubus of other men's evils; it was an indigestion arising from dinners eaten by his neighbours; it was a silver imprint, in letters of current coin, telling a tale of other men's dishonesty, misappropriation, and imposture.

Just at that moment, the Very Reverend the Dean of Noughtenborough chanced to pass by, looking unexceptionably respectable, black, and sleek, with a hat and cassock that even Wildgoose must have revered. He moved politely, and said "Good morning" to the Mayor, who returned both the salutation and the wish. But, as he turned away from the Dean, he mentally, yet almost aloud, repeated the mysterious words "THREE AND SIXPENCE."

Anon, he met the Reverend Whittigift Grypnell, Canon of Noughtenborough, also out for his morning's walk, and looking quite as respectable, black, and sleek, as the Dean. Again polite salutations were exchanged, and again the Mayor muttered the words "THREE AND SIXPENCE."

What could there be in the presence of the Dean and Canon of Noughtenborough so painfully suggestive of "THREE AND SIXPENCE?" Was the poor Mayor degenerating into *monomania*, and were clergymen the especial irritants that developed it?

No: the solution of this enigma lay deep in the volumes of Church history, over which our worthy Mayor had been poring; and it is from those volumes only that we can draw an explanation of his deep and solemn musings on this important financial subject.

Centuries ago, when scarcely a street-full of wooden houses formed a village where now stands the city of Noughtenborough, when the river used to flood the country *ad libitum*, and when monasteries were in their flourishing state, there lived a certain widow, who had long since lost her husband in one battle somewhere, and all her sons in other battles elsewhere. Bowed down with grief, her only solace was the society of her daughter, the fairest flower of the whole neighbourhood for miles around, but whose youthful countenance bore sad marks of early sorrow. Many had wooed her, but she clung to her mother; and daughter and mother lived on their life of mourning till age and grief began to make them more alike. They might have been thought sisters in years, as well as in sadness.

Wealth, abundant wealth, was theirs, and charity, the truest, the noblest, and the most unlimited, proclaimed the fact. Religion, deepened by grief, but not degraded into abject superstition, had adorned the monastery of Noughtenborough with a hundred testimonies of taste and liberality, while poverty of every kind found

relief proportionate to its deserts and its exigencies.

But in all their deeds of charity, the ladies St. Bridget's Mount had nothing so much at heart as the education of the most promising boys in their neighbourhood. Perhaps in the mind of the mother there arose some recollection of the noble youths whom she had seen speed forth in full steel, never to return, but to breathe out a last longing for a mother's blessing, while the horses of their retreating foes trod their corse on the battle-field. Perhaps the daughter bethought her of the return of her last remaining brother, pale and wounded; how she had held the water to his lips, bathed his parched forehead with her tears, and how he had laid his heavy head in her arms, and slept for ever. Perhaps it was such sad, such holy recollections, that made both the friends of every blooming boy they met, that wiped the tears of weeping and delinquent urchins, and that founded the school of St. Laura in Noughtenborough.

Attached to the monastery, the school was of limited extent and endowment, but suited to the wants of the times. When ploughing was more fashionable than reading, and fighting more popular than either, no one would have expected a London University or King's College in a place like Noughtenborough. But, as the magnificent cathedral rose out of the humble monastery, as

fighting gave place to human pursuits, and as refinement proportionately increased, the number of the "to be educated" had increased in a correspondingly extensive ratio.

Such was, briefly, the history of the school now attached to the cathedral church of St. Laura, Noughtenborough. The Dean and Canons, who had stepped into the enjoyment of plenty of the old property of the monastery, were quiet, inoffensive people, dropped into good berths out of close fellowships, lucky tutorships to "nobs," or the happy chance of being related to a Bishop. They lived well, died highly respected, and their places were gladly taken by new comers like themselves. In fact, they were all alike. No one ever missed one of them, for if prosperity and port took him suddenly away, the new comer was so like that no one found any difference. They paid their stated guinea, or five pounds, to particular charities, put a sovereign instead of a shilling into the offertory, preached drowsy sermons on Sunday, and had large families of children, all with exemplary and methodical regularity. In fact, they were all copies of the last — all rubbings of the same brass; all equally black, grotesque, and imperturbable.

Among other "regularities" of this worthy order, their visit to the school-house twice a year was an important event. The Dean appeared in his full canonicals,

the Canons in theirs, the boys conjugated and parsed, and all was "perfectly satisfactory." But there were still only the same number of boys on the foundation, and "twelve poore boyes" alone received the benefit of the education provided by the pious ladies St. Bridget's Mount. The master was permitted to receive other boys as day scholars at an extra charge, and, as the original salary was only forty pounds a year, and he got much more by the day scholars, he neglected the others in proportion. In fact, the day scholars looked upon the foundation scholars as a respectable kind of "charity boys."

Often had our kind-hearted Mayor lamented the unimproved and neglected condition of the school, and sadly had he contrasted its present state with the intentions contemplated by its pious and kindly founders. Clearly did he calculate how great ought to have been the means of education now at the command of the townspeople, had the money, left for that purpose, increased in the same manner as the incomes of the Bishop, the Dean, and the Chapter. But, with all his careful investigation of documents, his anxious searching into history, nothing satisfactory rewarded his labours. History appeared to be conveniently deficient just where a connecting link was most wanting; abuses seemed to have grown up and vegetated in hearty freshness, with a kind of tacit consent, and certainly with

out any visible opposition. One office suddenly disappeared, and the incomes of other offices suddenly became larger; buildings were removed, and private residences enlarged. Minor canonries subsided into paltry chaplaincies, and, in a word, the history of cathedrals seemed to like that of the ocean, in which the large fish were continually swallowing up the small.

Nor was the question of law much better. In the face of enactments against pluralities, our Mayor could not discover a single Dean or Canon who did not hold at least one other living, while the chaplains got nothing but what had been first refused by the whole chapter. The statutes were either unsatisfactory, or not forthcoming. But among all the black index of perjury, misappropriation, and inconsistency, to which this melancholy study of a noble subject gave rise, one little, but distinct fact, was destined to make more impression on the mind of the Mayor, and, subsequently, of all England, than even a sanguine imagination would have ventured to prognosticate.

In the ancient statutes of the School, which had fortunately been so mixed up with other interests, that it would have been impolitic to have lost them, it was ordered that the sum of "THREE POUNDS SIXTEEN SHILLINGS" should be paid to each of the twelve poor boys aforesaid, upon their leaving the school, always

providing that due report were made of their good conduct.

Now it did so happen, that, of late years, the Three Pounds Sixteen Shillings, instead of, like the other monies similarly bequeathed, augmenting and fructifying three-hundred-fold or more, had unaccountably dwindled away to the magnificently insignificant sum of "THREE AND SIXPENCE."

O most worthy Dean and Canons! Well might our Mayor pronounce these emphatic words as you passed in all your pride of black silk and respectability!

Was there some curse upon the funds left to these poor boys, that made them grow less, instead of growing greater? Was there some destroying angel that smote the fields that gave forth the corn whence these funds were raised?

Or did they think that it was a good thing that boys should go forth into the wide world with a little learning, and with three and sixpence to assist them to get more? Had they made a minue calculation of their own college expenses from personal experience, and arrived at the belief that "THREE AND SIXPENCE" was the magical sum which should set a youth on his career, whether in the scholastic or the commercial world? Even supposing so, what had become of the remainder of the money?

The Mayor was a quiet, but a determined, man. Not being in holy orders, he had not the slightest fear of being called an

“atheist” for declaiming against imposition; and being perfectly independent of the Church, he could not be robbed of any emoluments. He accordingly held an assembly of the corporation and other chief citizens; and sent in a quiet, but firm and strictly legal, remonstrance touching the present state of the School of St. Laura, Noughtenborough.

The Dean and Chapter, who had been very uncomfortable about certain similar disclosures which appeared to be going the round of all the similar institutions in the country, felt that their turn was come. If there had been the smallest opportunity for escape, they would have fought lustily. But they, like some of their predecessors in innovation, had the wrong sort of man to deal with.

The character of the Mayor, and his influence upon the citizens generally, were so well known, that the Dean and Chapter wisely gave up all hopes of bringing intimidation, flattery, or sophistry to bear on the present occasion. Accordingly, they sent a polite, but distant reply, avowing their intention of “considering” the subject; and at the very next examination three of the boys were dismissed with the sum of Three Pounds Sixteen Shillings.

They had, however, relied too much on one act of honesty, and had calculated too fondly on its value in wiping out a multitude of old grievances. The memorial sent by the Mayor and Corpora-

tion was more general in its demands. Not only was the dilapidated state of the school-house pointed out in strong terms, but the inefficiency of the master, the growing educational wants of the population of Noughtenborough, the want of a corresponding increase of educational resources, and other similar evils, were dwelt upon in a tone and manner that showed a determination to go on with the work already begun. In fact, the tacit admission that they had done wrong, implied in the immediate restoration of the Three Pounds Sixteen Shillings in lieu of the “THREE AND SIXPENCE,” which had dwelt so painfully on the Mayor’s mind, was a fine start for the opposing party, and the public press and the public thought so, and acted accordingly.

The Mayor proposes to establish twelve scholarships of thirty pounds a year each, to be of three or four years’ duration, and to be furnished out of the misappropriated funds of the last two or three hundred years, eked out by voluntary subscriptions, in which he will bear no inconsiderable share; albeit he believes, that, were anything like the original will of the foundress fully carried out, still larger provisions might be made, even without extraordinary funds. He also proposes that a proper staff of masters, at proper salaries, be engaged; and that the foundation scholarships, instead of being looked upon as “charity-school” affairs, and the

boys snubbed by the master, be made matters of competition to the rest, and that parents be led to send their children in the hopes of gaining one of the substantial prizes so established, instead of being taught to pride themselves on the nobility of their parents, which enables them to pay two guineas a quarter to enable their children to laugh at those for whose use the school was originally and properly established.

Whether these bright prospects and excellent ideas will be fully realised, we cannot tell; but perhaps the fact that the most clever boy of St. Laura is just going up to college at the expense of the Mayor, and a few other friends of like disposition with himself, will probably shame the "authorities" into studying arithmetic a little, and reforming the corrupt and lazy system which clings as firmly and unflinchingly to the cathedral of St. Laura, Noughtenborough, as the ivy to the old stone-wall around its meadows.

The Mayor is as hearty as ever, and will probably be returned to Parliament next year. If so, we will merely say a few words of caution to Deans and Chapters.

A wiser man than any of us once said, "Take care of the shillings, and the pounds will take care of themselves." In like manner we say, "If you would not provoke too much inquiry, that may end in your destruction, beware of seeking to pay Three Pounds Sixteen with

THREE AND SIXPENCE.

THE SOURCE OF JOY.

JOY springs in the heart that is tender
and kind,
Like a fountain that kisses and toys with
the wind;
Whence rills trickle softly to blend with
the ground,
Spreading freshness and verdure and
beauty around.

O! seek not for joy in the depths of the
bowl,
Nor quench in its poison the fire of the
soul;
Each draught leaves a seed that will
quicken and bear
An Upas to wither with grief and despair.
No! revelling yields not the bliss we de-
sire,
Though poets have sung in its praise to
the lyre;
True happiness flows in a still silent
stream,
Not whirling in eddies, as some fondly
deem.

It is found in the peace and the comforts
of home,
It is lost to the heart when in exile we
roam;
It is glimpsed in the smiles of the faces
we love,
Like a star beaming forth from its station
above.

But it blesses not those who are branded
with guilt
For the victim betray'd, or for blood idly
spilt;
It flies from the miser, the selfish, the
proud,
And eludes their pursuit till they lie in
the shroud.

Be kind to thy neighbour, but stern to
thyself,
Grant freely to wretches the aid of thy
pelf;
Press hopefully forward — the treasure
is thine,
A treasure more precious than lurks in
the mine!

THINGS DEPARTED.

I USE the parlour, I am not ashamed to say it, of the Blue Pigeon. There was an attempt, some months since, headed, I believe, by that self-educated young jackanapes Squirrel, to prevail on the landlord to change the appellation of "parlour" into coffee-room; to substitute horsehair-covered benches for the Windsor chairs; to take the sand off the floor, and the tobacco-stoppers off the table. I opposed it. Another person had the impudence to propose the introduction of a horrible seditious publication, which he called a liberal newspaper. I opposed it. So I did the anarchical proposition to rescind our standing order, that any gentleman smoking a cigar instead of a pipe, on club nights, should be fined a crown bowl of punch. From this you will, perhaps, Sir, infer that I am a Conservative. Perhaps I am. I have my own opinions about Catholic Emancipation, Parliamentary Reform, and the Corn Laws.

I have nothing to do with politics, nor politics with me, just now; but I will tell you what object I have in addressing you. I can't help thinking, coming home from the club, how curiously we adapt ourselves to the changes that are daily taking place around us; how, one by one, old habits and old customs die away, and we go about our business as unconcernedly as though they never had been. Almost the youngest

of us — if he choose to observe, and can remember what he observes — must have a catalogue of "things departed;" of customs, ceremonies, institutions, to which people were used, and which fell gradually into disuse; which seemed, while they existed, to be almost necessities of life, and for which now they don't care the value of a Spanish bond. There was a friend of mine, a man of genius, whose only fault was his continuous drunkenness, who used to say, that the pith of the whole matter lay in the "doctrine of averages." I was never a dab at science and that sort of thing; but I suppose he meant that there was an average in the number of his tumblers of brandy and water, in the comings up of new fashions, and in the goings down old ones; then of the old ones coming up again, and so *vice versâ*, till I begin to get muddled (morally muddled, of course), and give up the doctrine of averages in despair.

I have a copious collection in my memory of things departed. I am no chicken (though not the gray-headed old foggy that insulting Squirrel presumes to call me); but if I were to tell you a tithe of what I can remember in the way of departed fashions, manners, and customs, the very margins of this article would be flooded with type. Let me endeavour to recall a few — a very few only — of what I call things departed.

Hackney-coaches, for instance. Why, a boy of twelve years of

age can remember them; and yet, where are they now? Who thinks of them? Grand, imposing, musty-smelling, unclean old institutions they were. Elaborate heraldic devices covered their panels; dim legends used to be current amongst us children, that they had all been noblemen's carriages once upon a time, but falling — with the princely houses they appertained to — into decay, had so come to grief and hackney-coach-hood. They had wonderful coachmen, too — imposing individuals, in coats with capes infinite in number. How they drove! How they cheated! How they swore! The keenest of your railway cabbies, the most extortionate of your crack Hansoms, would have paled before the unequalled Billingsgate of those old-world men, at the comprehensive manner in which you, your person, costume, morals, family, and connections, were cursed. As all boatmen at Portsmouth have (or say they have) been Nelson's coxswain, so used I to believe every hackney-coachman I saw to be the identical Jarvey who had been put inside his own vehicle by the Prince of Wales, and driven about the metropolis by that frolicsome and royal personage, in company with Beau Brummell, Colonel Hanger, and Philippe Égalité. But the hackney-coach is now one of the things departed. There is one — one still, I believe — stationed in the environs of North Audley Street, Oxford Street. I have seen it — a ghostly, unsub-

stantial pageant — flit before me, among cabs and omnibuses, like a vehicular phantom ship. The coachman is not the rubicund, many-caped Jehu of yore. He is a thin, weazened old man in a *jacket* (Hear it!) and Wellington boots. The armorial bearings on the coach panels are defaced; the springs creak; the wheels stumble as they roll. I should like to know the man who has the courage to call that hackney-coach off the stand, and to ride in it. He *must* be a Conservative.

What have they done with the old hackney-coaches? Have they sent them to Paris as raw materials for barricades? Are their bodies yet mouldering, as in a vale of dry bones, in some Long Acre coach-builder's back-shop? and some day, mounted on fresh springs, fresh painted and fresh glazed, newly emblazoned with heraldic lies, with flaunting ham-mercloths and luxurious squabs, are they to roll once more to courtly levee, or civic feast, to stop the way at ball or opera, to rattle nobility to the portal of St. George's, Hanover Square, to be married, or follow it, creeping, and with windows up, to be buried?

What have they done with the old cabriolets, too — the bouncing, rattling, garishly-painted cabs, with a hood over the passenger, and a little perch on one side for the driver? They upset apple-stalls often — their fares too frequently. Their drivers were good whips, and their horses skittish. Where are they now? Do

they ply in the streets of Sydney or San Francisco, or have their bodies been cut up, years ago, for firewood and lucifer-matches?

Intimately connected, in association and in appearance, with the Jarveys, were the Charleys, or watchmen. They went out with oil lamps, the Duke of Wellington's ministry, and the Bourbon family. Like the coachmen, they wore many-caped coats; like them, they wore low-crowned hats, and were rubicund in the countenance; like them, they were abusive. In the days of our youth we used to beat these Charleys, to appropriate their rattles, to suspend them in mid air, like Mahomet's coffin, in their watch-boxes. Now-a-days, there be stern men, Policemen, in oilskin hats, with terrible truncheons, and who "stand no nonsense;" *they* do all the beating themselves, and lock us up, when we would strive to knock them down. There is yet, to this day, a watch-box — a real monumental watch-box standing, a relic of days gone by — somewhere near Orchard Street, Portman Square. It has been locked up for years; and great-coated policemen pass it nightly, on their beat, and cast an anxious glance towards it, lest night prowlers should be concealed behind its worm-eaten walls.

And, touching great coats, are not great coats themselves among the things departed? We have Paletôts (the name of which many have assumed), Ponchos, Burnouses, Sylphides, Zephyr wrap-

pers, Chesterfields, Llamas, Pilot wrappers, Wrap-rascals, Bis-uniques, and a host of other garments, more or less answering the purpose of an over-coat. But where is the great coat — the long, voluminous, wide-skirted garment of brown or drab broad-cloth, reaching to the ankle, possessing unnumbered pockets; pockets for bottles, pockets for sandwiches, secret pouches for cash, and side pockets for bank-notes? This venerable garment had a cape, which, in wet or snowy weather, when travelling outside the Highflyer coach, you turned over your head. Your father wore it before you, and you hoped to leave it to your eldest son. Solemn repairs — careful renovation of buttons and braiding were done to it, from time to time. A new great coat was an event — a thing to be remembered as happening once or so in a lifetime.

There are more coaches and coats that are things departed, besides hackney-coachmen and long great coats. Where are the short stages? Where are the days when we went gipsying, in real stage-coaches, from the Flower Pot, in Bishopsgate Street, to Epping Forest, or to Kensington, or to the inaccessible Hampstead? The time occupied in those memorable journeys now suffices for our transportation to Brighton — fifty-two good English miles. Where is the Brighton coach itself? its four blood horses; the real, live baronet, who coached it

for a livelihood; and, for all the "bloody hand" in his scutcheon, sent round his servant to collect the gratuitous half-crowns from the passengers.

Things departed are the pleasant view of London from Shooter's Hill, the houses on the river, and, over all, the great dome of St. Paul's looming through the smoke. What is the great North Road now? one of the Queen's highways, and nothing more; but, in those days, it was the great coaching thoroughfare of the kingdom. Highgate flourished; but, where is Highgate now? I was there the other day. The horses were gone, and the horse-troughs, and the horse-keepers. Yet, from the window of the Gatehouse I could descry in one *coup d'œil*, looking northwards, *thirteen public-houses*. The street itself was deserted, save by a ragged child, struggling with a pig for the battered remnant of a kettle. I wondered who supported those public-houses now; whether the taps were rusty, and the pots dull; or, whether, in sheer desperation at the paucity of custom, the publicans had their beer from one another's houses, and, at night, smoked their pipes and drank their grog in one another's bar-parlours. So, yet wondering and undecided, I passed through Highgate Archway — where no man offered to swear me — and came to the turnpike, where I saw a lamentable illustration of the hardness of the times, in the turnpike-man being obliged to

take toll in kind; letting a coster-monger, and a donkey-cart through for vegetables; and a small boy, going Islington-wards, for an almost bladeless knife.

Where is Cranbourn Alley? where that delightful maze of dirty, narrow, little thoroughfares, leading from Leicester Square to St. Martin's Lane? There was an alley of bonnet shops — behind whose dusty windows faded Tuscans and Leghorns were visible, and at the doors of which stood women, slatternly in appearance, but desperate and accomplished touters. Man, woman, or child, it was all the same to them; if they had made up their minds that you were to buy a bonnet, buy one you were obliged to do, unless gifted with rare powers for withstanding passionate persuasion and awful menace. Piteous stories were told of feeble-minded old gentlemen emerging from the "courts," half-fainting, laden with bonnet-boxes, and minus their cash, watches and jewellery, which they had left behind them, in part payment for merchandise which they had bought, or had been compelled to buy. The Lowther Arcade was not built in those days; and, in Cranbourn Alley, there were toy-shops, and cheap jewellery warehouses, and magazines for gimcracks of every description. Moreover, in Cranbourn Alley was there not Hamlet's — not Hamlet the Dane, but Hamlet, the silversmith! How many times have I stood, wonder-

ing, by those dirty windows, when I ought to have been wending my way to Mr. Wackerbarth's seminary for young gentlemen! Peering into the dim obscurity, dimly making out stores of gigantic silver dish-covers, hecatombs of silver spoons and forks — Pelions upon Ossas of race-cups and church services, — Hamlet was, to me, a synonyme with boundless wealth, inexhaustible credit, the payment of Consols — the grandeur of commercial Britain, in fact. Hamlet, Cranbourn Alley, and the Constitution! Yet Cranbourn Alley and Hamlet are both things departed.

In the shops in this neighbourhood they sold things which have long since floated down the sewer of Lethe into the river of Limbo. What has become of the tinder-box? — the box we never could find when we wanted it; the tinder that wouldn't light; the flint and steel that wouldn't agree to strike a light till we had exhausted our patience, and chipped numerous small pieces of skin and flesh from our fingers? Yet Bacon wrote his "Novum Organum," and Blackstone his "Commentaries," by tinder-box-lighted lamps: and Guy Faux was very nearly blowing up the Legislature with a tinder-box-lighted train. The tinder-box is gone now; and, in its place, we have sinister-looking splints, made from chopped-up coffins; which, being rubbed on sand-paper, send forth a diabolical glare, and a suffocating smoke. But they do not

fail, like the flint and steel, and light with magical rapidity; so, as everybody uses them, I am obliged to do so too.

And, while I speak of lights and smoke, another thing departed comes before me. There is no such a thing as a pipe of tobacco now-a-days, Sir. I see English gentlemen go about smoking black abominations like Irish apple-women. I hear of Milo's, Burns' cutty pipes, Narghiles, Chiboucks, meerschauts, hoo-kahs, water pipes, straw pipes, and a host of other inventions for emitting the fumes of tobacco. But where, Sir, is the old original alderman pipe, the churchwarden's pipe, the unadulterated "yard of clay?" A man was wont to moisten the stem carefully with beer ere he put it to his lips; when once it was alight, it kept alight; a man could sit behind that pipe, but can a man sit behind the ridiculous figments they call pipes now? The yard of clay is departed. A dim shadow of it lingers sometimes in the parlours of old city taverns; I met with it once in the Bull Ring at Birmingham. I have heard of it in Chester; but in its entirety, as a popular, acknowledged pipe, it must be numbered with the things that were.

Where are the franks? I do not allude to the warlike race of Northmen, who, under the sway of Pharamond, first gave France its name; neither to I mean those individuals who, rejoicing in the appellation of Francis, are willing

to accept the diminutive of Frank. I mean those folded sheets of letter-paper, which, being endorsed with the signature of a peer, or of a Member of Parliament, went thenceforward post-free. There were regular frank-hunters — men who could nose a Member who had not yet given all his franks away, with a scent as keen as ever Cuban blood-hound had for negro flesh. He would give chase in the lobby; run down the doomed legislator within the very shadow of the Sergeant-at-Arms' bag-wig; and, after a brief contest, unfrank him on the spot. They were something to look at, and something worth having, those franks, when the postage to Edinburgh was thirteen-pence. But the franks are gone — gone with the procession of the mail-coaches on the first of May; they have fallen before little effigies of the sovereign, printed in red, and gummed at the back. English Members of Parliament have no franks now; and the twenty-five (though of a metallic nature) allowed, till very lately, to the Members of the French Legislature, have even been abolished.

I never think of franks without a regretful remembrance of another thing departed — a man who, in old times, stood on the steps of the Post-office in St. Martin's le Grand, with a sheet of cartridge-paper, and whom I knew by the appellation of "it forms," "It forms," he was continually saying, "now it forms a jockey-cap, now a church-door, a fan, a mat, the

paddle-boxes of a steamer, a cocked hat;" and, as he spoke, he twisted the paper into something bearing a resemblance to the articles he named. He is gone; so is the sheet of fools-cap *we* used to twist into the semblance of cocked hats, silkworm-boxes, and boats, when boys at school. The very secret of the art is lost in these degenerate days, I verily believe, like that of making Venetian bezoar, or staining glass for windows.

Whole hosts of street arts and street artists are among the things departed. Where is the dancing bear, with his piteous brown muzzle and uncouth gyrations? Where is the camel? Where the tight-rope dancers? the performers on stilts? Where are these gone? Say not that the New Police Act has abolished them; for though that sweeping piece of legislation has silenced the dustman's bell, and bade the muffin boy cry muffins no more, we have still the organ-grinders with, or without, monkeys, the Highland bag-pipes, and the acrobats. The fantoccinis are almost extinct; and I suppose Punch will go next. It is all very well, and right, and proper, of course. Dancing bears, and camels, monkeys, and fantoccinis, are all highly immoral, no doubt; but I should just like to see what the British Constitution would be without Punch and Judy.

The small-coal man is gone; the salono stall; the blind man and his dog are becoming *rare*

aves; the grizzled Turk with a dirty turban, and a box of rhubarb before him, is scarcely ever to be met with. In his stead we have a liver-coloured Lascar, shivering in white cotton robes, selling tracts of the inflammatory order of Piety, and occasionally offering them in exchange for gin. Age, caprice, the encouragement of new favourites, are driving these old-established ornaments of the streets away.

I do not quarrel so much with the ever-changing fashions in dress. I can give up without a sigh the leg-of-mutton sleeves, those dreadful pear-shaped monsters of silk and muslin, they wore about the year '30. I will not clamour for the revival of the bishop's sleeves — unwieldy articles that were always either getting squashed flat as a pancake in a crowd, or dipping into the gravy at dinner. I will resign the monstrous Leghorn hats — the short-waisted pelisses, the Cosack trousers, and flaming stocks in which we arrayed ourselves, when George the Fourth was king; but let me drop one tear, heave one sigh, to the memories of pig-tails and Hessian boots.

Both are things departed. One solitary pig-tail, I believe, yet feebly flourishes in some remote corner of the agricultural districts of England. It comes up to town during the season; and I have seen it in New Burlington Street. The Hessians, though gone from the lower extremities of a nation, yet find abiding place on the

calves of the Stranger in Mr. Kotzebue's play of that name, and over the portals of some boot-makers of the old school. The Hessians of our youth are gone. The mirror-polished, gracefully outlined, silken tasselled Hessians exist no more — those famous boots, the soles of which Mr. Brummell caused to be blacked, and in the refulgent lustre of which the gentleman of fashion immortalised by Mr. Warren was wont to shave himself.

Of the buildings, the monuments, the streets, which are gone, I will not complain. I can spare that howling desert in the area of Leicester Fields, with its battered railings, its cat-haunted parterres, its gravel walks, usurped by snails, and overgrown with weeds. I like Mr. Wild's Great Globe better. I can dispense with the old Mews of Charing Cross, and the bill-covered hoarding surrounding them, though I loved the latter, for the first announcement of the first play I ever saw, was pasted there. I like Trafalgar Square (barring the fountains) better. I can surrender the horrible collection of mangy sheds, decomposed vegetables, and decaying baskets, which used to block up Farringdon Street, and which they called Fleet Market. I can renounce, though with a sigh, the Fleet Prison, acquiesce in the superiority of New Oxford Street over St. Giles's and the Holy Land, and of Victoria Street, as compared with the dirt and squalor and crime of Westminster. Yet,

let me heave one sigh for King's Cross, that anomalous little area where many roads converge, and many monuments have stood. There was a stone monster, an adamantine Guy Fawkes, which was traditionally supposed to represent George the good, the magnificent, the great; his curly wig, his portly mien, his affable countenance. Little boys used to chalk their political opinion freely on the pedestal accompanied by rough cartoons of their parents, and guardians, their pastors and masters; omnibus drivers and conductors pointed the finger of hilarity at it, as they passed by; it was a great statue. They have taken it away, with the Small-pox Hospital into the bargain, and though they have set up another George, stirrupless, hatless, and shoeless, in Trafalgar Square, and the Hospital is removed elsewhere, the terminus of the Great Northern Railway, and the pedestal with three big lamps now standing in their stead, are a dis-sight to mine eyes, and make me long for the old glories of King's Cross and Battle Bridge.

Smithfield is going. Tyburn is gone (I am not such an old foggy, Mr. Squirrel, as to be able to remember *that*; nor so stanch a Conservative as to regret it, now that it is gone). Bartholomew Fair is gone. Greenwich Fair going. Chalk Farm Fair a melancholy mockery of merriment. Let me ask a few more interrogations, and let me go too.

Where are the fogs? Light

brumous vapours I see hanging over London, in December; but not the fogs of my youth. They were orange-coloured, substantial, palpable fogs, that you could cut with a knife, or bottle up for future inspection. In those fogs vessels ran each other down on the river; link-boys were in immense request; carriages and four drove into chemists' shops and over bridges; and in the counting house of Messrs. Bingo, Mandingo, and Flamingo, where I was a small boy, copying letters, we burnt candles in the rusty old sconces all day long. I saw a fog, a real fog, the other day, travelling per rail from Southampton; but it was a white one, and gave me more the idea of a balloon voyage, than of the fog *de facto*.

Gone with the fogs are the link-boys, the sturdy, impudent varlets, who beset you on murky nights with their flaming torches, and the steady-going, respectable, almost aristocratic link-bearers, with silver badges often, who had the monopoly of the doors of the opera, and of great men's houses, when balls or parties were given. I knew a man once who was in the habit of attending the nobilities' entertainments, not by the virtue of an invitation, but by the grace of his own indomitable impudence, and by the link-boys' favour. An evening costume, an unblushing mien, and a crown to the link-boy, would be sufficient to make that worthy bawl out his name and style to the hall-porter; the hall-porter would shout it to the foot-

man; the footman yell it to the groom of the chambers; while the latter intoning it for the benefit of the lady or gentleman of the house, those estimable persons would take it for granted that they *must* have invited him; and so bowing and complimenting, as a matter of course, leave him without restriction to his abominable devices, in the way of dancing, flirting, *écarté* playing, and supper-eating. Few and far between are the link-boys in this present 1852. The running footmen with the flambeaux have vanished these many years; and the only mementos surviving of their existence are the blackened extinguishers attached to the area railings of some old-fashioned houses about Grosvenor Square. With the flambeaux, the sedan-chairs have also disappeared; the drunken Irish chairmen who carried them; the whist-loving old spinsters, who delighted to ride inside them. I have seen *disjecta membra* — venerable ruins, here and there, of the sedan-chairs at Bath, at Cheltenham, at Brighton; but the bones thereof are marrowless, and its eyes without speculation.

The old articles of furniture that I loved, are things departed. The mirror, with its knobby gilt frame, and stunted little branches for candles, the podgy eagle above it, and its convex surface reflecting your face in an eccentric and distorted manner; the dumb waiter, ugly and useful; the dear old spinnet, on which aunt Sophy used to play those lamentable pieces of

music, the "Battle of Prague" and the "Caliph of Bagdad;" the old chiffonnier, the "whatnot," and the "Canterbury;" the work-box, with a view of the Pavilion at Brighton on the lid; the Tunbridge ware, (supplanted now by vile, beautifully-painted, artistical things of papier-maché, from Birmingham, forsooth,) — gone, and for ever.

Even while I talk, whole crowds of "things departed" flit before me, of which I have neither time to tell, nor you patience to hear. Post-boys, "wax-ends from the palace," Dutch-pugs, black footmen, the window-tax, the Palace Court, Gatton, and Old Sarum! What will go next, I wonder? Temple-Bar, Lord Mayor's Day, or the "Gentleman's Magazine?"

Well, well: it is all for the best, I presume. These trivial things that I have babbled of, have but departed with the leaves and the melting snow — with the hopes that are extinguished, and the ambition that is crushed — with dear old friends dead, and dearer friendships severed. I will be content to sit on the milestone by the great road, and, smoking my pipe, watch the chariot of life, with Youth on the box and Pleasure in the dicky, tear by till the dust thrown up by its wheels has whitened my hair, and it shall be my time to be numbered among the things departed.

HOW CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME, NEAR HAMBURG.

ABOUT three miles from Hamburg there is an institution called the Rauhe Haus (the Rough House), which consists in substance of certain detached huts and buildings prettily scattered among trees and flower-plots, all tenanted by men and boys. Once upon a time — and that no very distant time — there was here but a single cottage, which, having no resemblance to a marble hall, was styled the Rauhe Haus. There dwelt in it, with his mother, a certain Pastor Wichern, who, having nothing like a marble heart, received into his home three outcast boys, that he might train and save them. The energy of goodness made this first act of benevolence a living seed. The Rauhe Haus is now a famous institution, which includes, upon its small domain of thirty acres, Pastor Wichern and his wife, seven young clergymen not yet in orders, thirty-five artisans or “Brothers,” and some masterworkmen; five deaconesses, and a hundred children; about seventy of these being boys, and thirty girls.

The children are of a class somewhat similar to that which forms the congregation at our Ragged schools. Quite similar we cannot say, because anything quite like, or nearly like, the misery of English pauper children, does not exist in any other Protestant community in the whole round of the world. Children are not often

taken to the Rauhe Haus out of a prison, though they are sent thither when convicted of small offences, instead of being sent to gaol. The object at the Rauhe Haus is not only, by a pure and Christian discipline, to save these outcast children, and create them into ministers of good, but also to provide Protestant missionaries — not for Timbuctoo, but for the fallen or the falling souls in Fatherland.

The brothers at the Rauhe Haus receive nothing notable as pay; they have board, lodging, clothing, and pocket-money to the extent of about three shillings a month. This they receive not as their hire, but as the supply of necessities while they labour for the love of God to educate the little children. These brothers are at liberty to leave the institution when they please, upon a quarter's notice; and for their admission no conditions are necessary, except that they have knowledge of some trade, a healthy mind and body; that they be twenty years old, unmarried and unbetrothed. They have also to pass through a certain probation for the purpose of ascertaining whether they have sufficient self-denial for the due fulfilment of their duties. At the Rauhe Haus, the brothers have, beside the sense that they are labouring for good, other inducements to remain. They teach trades to the children, and in turn receive instruction from the young clergymen who await ordination at the Rauhe Haus after having concluded their university career. By

these young ministers the brothers are instructed in theology, philosophy, geography, grammar, &c.; so that they are prepared for their future labours as home missionaries. What do these higher teachers learn? Is there no one from whom they also receive instruction? Certainly there is. Aristotle and Euclid are not the only preparation for a Christian ministry; and these young Germans, who spend years at the Rauhe Haus before their ordination without any salary, have there a prison, a hospital, and a school, where they may learn among the helpless and the sick and the imprisoned to discharge the duties of their future calling. We should here state that the Rauhe Haus has not only grown itself, but has sent up from its vigorous roots many an offshoot. Among others, there is at Duisburg a similar institution, of which the director is a minister, who studied, unordained, under the good Pastor Wichern.

The little estate at Rauhe Haus is entirely cultivated by spade labour. In busy seasons for the field, other occupations being laid aside, the entire population of a hundred and fifty, men and boys, turn out to work. There are nine houses now. Six of these are family houses for the boys and their attendants; these houses are rough enough, for the boys themselves built them; but they, and all that they contain, rough beds and rough linen, are completely clean. There are those six houses out of

the nine; and then there is also a house to contain the workshops, with rooms on the upper floor for brothers not actually engaged about the boys. There is also the house of Pastor Wichern and his wife, with room for the thirty girls and the five deaconesses, who cook, wash, and perform all the humble duties of a woman. The boys have a printing-press, and some are trained as printers; some learn bookbinding; some study the whole art of tailoring; others make shoes; others bake; there are carpenters; there are boys learning to make lithographs and woodcuts. Gardening and agriculture is learned by them all. Half of the boys are at work always, while the others are at school. Each, when he leaves the institution, is bound apprentice to the trade that he has studied.

What is the discipline among these children? Not very British, certainly. Britannia's fingers are too hard and clumsy when she stretches out her hand to touch or lead a child. It is hard to say so of a lady, but she is a horny-handed woman. At Rauhe Haus, as has been said already, the houses and shops are scattered pleasantly among the trees and flowers. The flowers are the children's property. Every boy has his plot of ground, but he is allowed only to grow flowers in it, for it is designed to make the outcast learn to love the beautiful. The children are not marshalled about, and set down like a regiment before a mile of dinner. They are separated into

families of twelve, and in each family the true method of nature is consulted by the blending, into one group, of children differently aged; that by mutual help, and love in each, of companions both stronger and weaker than himself, the child's mind may develop itself nearly as it does at home. The "Brother" seeks to be the father to his household. On the chapel table you would see some little books, in one of which are set down the birthdays of the little members of the household, and the elders too. At daily prayer, a child may rise and say, "To-day is William Ritter's birth-day," and in the chapel William Ritter is congratulated then, and prayed for in the simple way that touches William Ritter's heart, and presents tumble in upon the little fellow. To the brothers, too, or the young clergymen, the birth-day is a day of loving words and loving little gifts. The boys have an allowance of just so much pocket money as enables them to stir each other's hearts in this way, and to pay for anything they spoil or break; so they acquire a sense of property. Their chapel is decked out by their own hands pleasantly with flowers and green boughs; on Christmas-day, or other important Christian festivals, they go into the lanes, and bring the blind, the lame, the poor, into their house of worship, where they make them little gifts out of their pocket money.

The Brothers, teaching in the workshops, or presiding in rota-

tion as the heads of families, are trained for one of four vocations; they either go abroad to plant new institutions similar to that at Rauhe Haus, or to be gaolers in prisons, where they may put themselves in kindly communion with the wretched, who are never lost while they are within sound of the voice of true humanity; or they become pedlars — Pilgrim Brothers they are called — and travel over Germany, seeking to carry good from house to house among the poor; or they become preachers and teachers in the colonies. To go abroad they seldom wish, although invited often; their chief desire is to obtain admission as gaolers into the prisons, and win over the criminals to virtue.

Of course, at the Rauhe Haus, there is a great deal of teaching to sing. There is a good deal of happy playing too. The staff of Brothers being large, their labour is divided and shifted, so that each has a various experience. At the same time, one brother presides over the playhouse; another, over each of the several trades; another, over each little family. There is a brother for the novitiate or newly-admitted boys. There are four brothers, whose work it is to preserve the home affection in such children as have parents out of doors. They take them often to their families, and foster to the utmost every young thought that can be brought to shape itself into a kiss. The brothers who go thus among the most desolate of the poor, acquire

knowledge of their future duties; they also visit the poor generally, and already commence labour in adjacent prisons. There is a "Child's Hospital" in which they teach — and learn; and there are also model lodging-houses, in which they hold services three times a week. Besides all regular duties, the good brothers are perpetually in request throughout a large circle of neighbours who require often the aid and comfort of a kindly heart and ready sympathy.

The institution at the Rauhe Haus is, of course, self-supporting, and the land is able to accommodate an increasing number of children. Two brothers watch at all times to prevent the escape of children who are not yet fairly softened; but there is no wall, there are no locked gates to frown down at the home among the flowers.

NEW DISCOVERIES IN GHOSTS.

ECLIPSES have been ascribed sometimes to the hunger of a great dragon, who eats the sun, and leaves us in the dark until the blazing orb has been mended. Numerous instances are ready to the memory of any one of us, in illustration of the tendency existing among men to ascribe to supernatural, fantastic causes, events wonderful only by their rarity. All that we daily see differs from these things no more

than inasmuch as it is at the same time marvellous and common. We know very well that the moon, seen once by all, would be regarded as an awful spectre: open only to the occasional vision of a few men, no doubt she would be scouted by a large party as a creation of their fancy altogether.

The list of facts that have been scouted in this way, corresponds pretty exactly to the list of human discoveries, down to the recent improvements in street lighting and steam locomotion. The knowledge of the best of us is but a little light which shines in a great deal of darkness. We are all of us more ignorant than wise. The proportion of knowledge yet lying beyond the confines of our explorations, is as a continent against a cabbage garden. Yet many thousands are contented to believe, that in this little bit of garden lies our all, and to laugh at every report made to the world by people who have ventured just to peep over the paling. It is urged against inquiries into matters yet mysterious — mysterious as all things look under the light of the first dawn of knowledge — why should we pry into them, until we know that we shall be benefited by the information we desire? All information is a benefit. All knowledge is good. Is it for man to say, "What is the use of seeing?"

We are in the present day upon the trace of a great many important facts relating to the impon-

derable agencies employed in nature. Light, heat, and electricity are no longer the simple matters, or effects of matter, that they have aforesaid seemed to be. New wonders point to more beyond. In magnetism, the researches of Faraday, and others, are beginning to open, in our own day, the Book of Nature, at a page of the very first importance to the naturalist; but the contents of which until this time have been wholly unsuspected. Behind a cloudy mass of fraud and folly, while the clouds shift, we perceive a few dim stars, to guide us towards the discovery of wondrous truths. There are such truths which will hereafter illustrate the connexion, in many ways still mysteries, between the body of man and the surrounding world. Wonderful things have yet to be revealed, on subjects of a delicate and subtle texture. It behoves us in the present day, therefore, to learn how we may keep our tempers free from prejudice, and not discredit statements simply because they are new and strange, nor, on the other hand, accept them hastily without sufficient proof.

On questionable points, which are decided by research and weight of evidence, it would be well if it were widely understood that it is by no means requisite for every man to form an Ay or Nay opinion. Let those who have no leisure for a fair inquiry play a neutral part. There are hundreds of subjects which we have never

examined, nor ever could or can examine, upon which we are all, nevertheless, expressing every day stubborn opinions. We all have to acquire some measure of the philosophic mind, and be content to retain a large army of thoughts, equipped each thought with its crooked bayonet, a note of interrogation. In reasoning, also, when we do reason, we have to remember fairly that "not proven" does not always mean untrue. And in accepting matters on testimony, we must rigidly preserve in view the fact, that, except upon gross objects of sense, very few of us are qualified by training as observers. In drawing delicate conclusions from the complex and most dimly comprehended operations of the human frame observed in men and women, the sources of fallacy are very numerous. To detect and acknowledge these, to get rid of them experimentally, is very difficult, even to the most candid and enlightened mind.

I have no faith in ghosts, according to the old sense of the word, and I could grope with comfort through any amount of dark old rooms, or midnight aisles, or over church-yards, between sunset and cock-crow. I can face a spectre. Being at one time troubled with illusions, I have myself crushed a hobgoblin by sitting on its lap. Nevertheless, I do believe that the great mass of "ghost stories," of which the world is full, has not been built entirely upon the inventions of

the ignorant and superstitious. In plain words, while I, of course, throw aside a million of idle fictions, or exaggerated facts, I do believe in ghosts — or, rather, spectres — only I do not believe them to be supernatural.

That, in certain states of the body, many of us in our waking hours picture as vividly as we habitually do in dreams, and seem to see or hear in fair reality that which is in our minds, is an old fact, and requires no confirmation. An ignorant or superstitious man fallen into this state, may find good reason to tell ghost stories to his neighbours. Disease, and the debility preceding death, make people on their death-beds very liable to plays of this kind on their failing faculties; and one solemnity, or cause of dread, thus being added to another, seems to give the strength of reason to a superstitious feeling.

Concerning my own experience, which comes under the class of natural ghost-seeing above mentioned, I may mention in good faith that, if such phantoms were worth recalling, I could fill up an hour with the narration of those spectral sights and sounds which were most prominent among the illusions of my childhood. Sights and sounds were equally distinct and lifelike. I have run up-stairs obedient to a spectral call. Every successive night for a fortnight, my childish breath was stilled by the proceedings of a spectral rat, audible, never visible. It nightly,

at the same hour, burst open a cupboard door, scampered across the floor, and shook the chair by my bedside. Wide awake and alone in the broad daylight, I have heard the voices of two nobodies gravely conversing, after the absurd dream fashion, in my room. Then as for spectral sights: — During the cholera of 1832, I, then a boy, walking in Holborn, saw in the sky the veritable flaming sword which I had learnt by heart out of a picture in an old folio of "Paradise Lost." And round the fiery sword there was a regular oval of blue sky to be seen through parted clouds. It was a fact not unimportant, that this phantom sword did not move with my eye, but remained for some time, apparently, only in one part of the heavens. I looked aside and lost it. When I looked back, there was the image still. These are hallucinations which arise from a disordered condition of the nervous system; they are the seeing or the hearing of what is not, and they are not by any means uncommon. Out of these there must, undoubtedly, arise a large number of well-attested stories of ghosts, seen by one person only. Such ghosts ought to excite no more terror than a twinge of rheumatism, or a nervous head-ache.

There can be no doubt, however, that, in our minds or bodies, there are powers latent, or nearly latent, in the ordinary healthy man, which, in some peculiar constitutions, or under the in-

fluence of certain agents, or certain classes of disease, become active, and develop themselves in an extraordinary way. It is not very uncommon to find people who have acquired intuitive perception of each others' current thoughts, beyond what can be ascribed to community of interests, or comprehension of character.

Zschokke, the German writer and teacher, is a peculiarly honourable and unimpeachable witness. What he affirms, as of his own knowledge, we have no right to disbelieve. Many of us have read the marvellous account given by him of his sudden discovery, that he possessed the power in regard to a few people — by no means in regard to all — of knowing, when he came near to them, not only their present thoughts, but much of what was in their memories. The details will be found in his Autobiography, which, being translated, has become a common book among us. When, for the first time while conversing with some person, he acquired a sense of power over the secrets of that person's past life, he gave, of course, but little heed to his sensation. Afterwards, as from time to time the sense recurred, he tested the accuracy of his impressions, and was alarmed to find that, at certain times, and in regard to certain persons, the mysterious knowledge was undoubtedly acquired. Once when a young man at the table with him was dismissing very flippantly all

manner of unexplained phenomena as the gross food of ignorance and credulity, Zschokke requested to know what he would say if he, a stranger, by aid of an unexplained power, should be able to tell him secrets out of his past life. Zschokke was defied to do that; but he did it. Among other things he described a certain upper room, in which there was a certain strong box, and from which certain moneys, the property of his master, had been abstracted by that young man; who, overwhelmed with astonishment, confessed the theft.

Many glimmerings of intuition, which at certain times occur in the experience of all of us, and seem to be something more than shrewd or lucky guesses, may be referred to the same power which we find, in the case just quoted, more perfectly developed. Nothing supernatural, but a natural gift, imperceptible to us in its familiar, moderate, and healthy exercise, brought first under our notice when some deranged adjustment of the mind has suffered it to grow into excess — to be, if we may call it so, a mental tumour.

We may now come to a new class of mysteries — which are receiving for the first time, in our own day, a rational solution.

The blind poet, Pfeffel, had engaged, as amanuensis, a young Protestant clergyman, named Billing. When the blind poet walked abroad, Billing also acted

as his guide. One day, as they were walking in the garden, which was situated at a distance from the town, Pfeffel observed a trembling of his guide's arm whenever they passed over a certain spot. He asked the cause of this, and extracted from his companion the unwilling confession, that over that spot he was attacked by certain uncontrollable sensations, which he always felt where human bodies had been buried. At night, he added, over such spots he saw uncanny things. "This is great folly," Pfeffel thought, "and I will cure him of it." The poet went, therefore, that very night into the garden. When they approached the place of dread, Billing perceived a feeble light, which hovered over it. When they came nearer, he saw the delicate appearance of a fiery, ghost-like form. He described it as the figure of a female with one arm across her body, and the other hanging down, hovering upright and motionless over the spot, her feet being a few hand-breadths above the soil. The young man would not approach the vision, but the poet beat about it with his stick, walked through it, and seemed to the eyes of Billing like a man who beats about a light flame, which always returns to its old shape. For months, experiments were continued, company was brought to the spot, the spectre remained visible always in the dark, but to the young man only, who adhered firmly to his statement, and to his

conviction that a body lay beneath. Pfeffel at last had the place dug up, and, at a considerable depth, covered with lime, there was a skeleton discovered. The bones and the lime were dispersed, the hole was filled up, Billing was again brought to the spot by night, but never again saw the spectre.

This ghost story, being well attested, created a great sensation. In the curious book, by Baron Reichenbach, translated by Dr. Gregory, it is quoted as an example of a large class of ghost stories which admit of explanation upon principles developed by his own experiments.

The experiments of Baron Reichenbach do not, indeed, establish a new science, though it is quite certain that they go far to point out a new line of investigation, which promises to yield valuable results. So much of them as concerns our subject may be very briefly stated. It would appear that certain persons, with disordered nervous systems, liable to catalepsy, or to such affections, and also some healthy persons who are of a peculiar nervous temperament, are more sensitive to magnetism than their neighbours. They are peculiarly acted upon by the magnet, and are, moreover, very much under the influence of the great magnetic currents of the earth. Such people sleep tranquilly when they are reposing with their bodies in the earth's magnetic line, and are restless, in some cases seriously

affected, if they lie across that line, on beds with the head and foot turned east and west, matters of complete indifference to the healthy animal. These "sensitives" are not only affected by the magnet, but they are able to detect, by their sharpened sense, what we may reasonably suppose to exist, a faint magnetic light: they see it streaming from the poles of a magnet shown to them, in a room absolutely dark; and if the sensibility be great, and the darkness perfect, they see it streaming also from the points of fingers, and bathing in a faint halo the whole magnet or the whole hand. Furthermore, it would appear that the affection by the magnet of these sensitives does not depend upon that quality by which iron filings are attracted; that, perfectly independent of the attractive force, there streams from magnets, from the poles of crystals, from the sun and moon, another influence to which the discoverer assigns the name of Odyle. The manifestation of Odyle is accompanied by a light too faint for healthy vision, but perceptible at night by "sensitives." Odyle is generated among other things by heat, and by chemical action. It is generated, therefore, in the decomposition of the human body. I may now quote from Reichenbach, who, having given a scientific explanation upon his own principles, of the phenomena perceived by Billing, thus continues: —

"The desire to inflict a mortal

wound on the monster, Superstition, which, from a similar origin, a few centuries ago, inflicted on European society so vast an amount of misery, and by whose influence not hundreds, but thousands, of innocent persons died in tortures, on the rack and at the stake; — this desire made me wish to make the experiment, if possible, of bringing a highly sensitive person, by night, to a churchyard. I thought it possible that they might see, over graves where mouldering bodies lay, something like that which Billing had seen. Mademoiselle Reichel had the courage, unusual in her sex, to agree to my request. She allowed me, on two very dark nights, to take her from the Castle of Reisenberg, where she was residing with my family, to the cemetery of the neighbouring village of Grünzing.

"The result justified my expectation in the fullest measure. She saw, very soon, a light, and perceived, on one of the grave mounds, along its whole extent, a delicate, fiery, as it were a breathing flame. The same thing was seen on another grave, in a less degree. But she met neither witches nor ghosts. She described the flame as playing over the graves in the form of a luminous vapour, from one to two spans in height.

"Some time afterwards I took her to two great cemeteries, near Vienna, where several interments occur daily, and the grave mounds lie all about in thousands. Here

she saw numerous graves, which exhibited the lights above described. Wherever she looked, she saw masses of fire lying about; but it was chiefly seen over all new graves, while there was no appearance of it over very old ones. She described it less as a clear flame than as a dense, vaporous mass of fire, holding a middle place between mist and flame. On many graves this light was about four feet high, so that when she stood on the grave, it reached to her neck. When she thrust her hand into it, it was as if putting it into a dense fiery cloud. She betrayed not the slightest uneasiness, as she was, from her childhood, accustomed to such emanations, and had seen, in my experiments, similar lights produced by natural means, and made to assume endless varieties of form. I am convinced that all who are, to a certain degree, sensitive, will see the same phenomena in cemeteries, and very abundantly in the crowded cemeteries of large cities; and that my observations may be easily repeated and confirmed." These experiments were tried in 1844. A postscript was added in 1847. Reichenbach had taken five other sensitive persons, in the dark, to cemeteries. Of these, two were sickly, three quite healthy. All of them confirmed the statements of Mademoiselle Reichel, and saw the lights over all new graves more or less distinctly; "so that," says the philosopher, "the fact can no longer admit of the slightest

doubt, and may be everywhere controlled."

"Thousands of ghost stories," he continues, "will now receive a natural explanation, and will thus cease to be marvellous. We shall even see that it was not so erroneous or absurd as has been supposed, when our old women asserted, as everyone knows they did, that not everyone was privileged to see the spirits of the departed wandering over their graves. In fact, it was at all times only the sensitive who could see the imponderable emanations from the chemical change going on in corpses, luminous in the dark. And thus I have, I trust, succeeded in tearing down one of the densest veils of darkened ignorance and human error."

So far speaks Reichenbach; and for myself, reverting to the few comments with which we set out, I would suggest, that Reichenbach's book, though it is very likely to push things too far — to fancy the tree by looking at the seed — is yet not such a book as men of sense are justified in scouting. The repetition of his experiments is very easy if they be correct. There are plenty of "sensitives" to be found in our London hospitals and streets and lanes. Unluckily, however, though we live in an age which produces, every day, new marvels, the old spirit of bigotry, which used to make inquiry dangerous in science and religion, still prevails in the minds of too many scientific men. To be incredulous

of what is new and strange, until it has been rigidly examined and proved true, is one essential element of a mind seeking enlightenment. But, to test and try new things is equally essential. Because of doubting, to refuse inquiry, is because of hunger to refuse our food. For my own part, I put these matters into the livery of that large body of thoughts already mentioned, which walk about the human mind, armed each with a note of interrogation. This only I see, that, in addition to the well-known explanations of phenomena, which produce some among the many stories of ghosts and of mysterious forebodings, new explanations are at hand which will reduce into a natural and credible position many other tales by which we have till recently been puzzled.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

IN PRAISE OF SALAD.

YOU do not know in England the importance of the salad question. You have traditions of gentlemen who have driven in their carriage from dinner-party to dinner-party, receiving fees, and practising with all the respectability attached to a grave doctor of physic, the profession of a salad-maker. Such traditions move you to a little wonder, but you are not moved thereby to much inquiry into the true principles of salad-dressing; you exercise the craft

empirically; you are quacks. Now, I having travelled through eminently salad-eating countries, with a proper reverence for salad as a part of my constitution, which at all times inclines to venerate whatever is mysterious,—I having thus travelled, and respectfully eaten, in Germany, in Italy, and, above all, in France, salads of many kinds, am qualified now, also, by bookish study, and by every preparation which an earnest mind should bring to the treatment of an important subject, to inform my countrymen. I request that which I now write may be read not frivolously, but in a serious and sober frame of mind, and, if aloud, that it be read with a dignified tone, and listened to with a majestic countenance. Salad is a subject of too much importance to be lightly handled. A French writer of the sixteenth century, falling into raptures about eggs, tells us, that he could vary his dinner every day for an entire twelvemonth, and yet dine always only upon eggs. In other words, he was acquainted with three hundred and sixty-five ways in which it was possible to prepare an egg for eating. By how much more is salad to be venerated, which admits not only of being dressed in three hundred and sixty-five different ways, but of which there are upwards of three hundred and sixty-five sorts to be dressed after each of the three hundred and sixty-five fashions!

A German writer goes into the etymology of salad, and informs

us that it is a word derived from salt. He finds this derivation very satisfactory, until he is brought to a full stop by those sweet varieties, like the sliced apples and oranges, which in his country are eaten with roast pig. There he is puzzled. The fact is, salad was in existence before man. Our boys take pleasure in a salad dressed by nature, a salad in which piquant flavours are exquisitely blended. This is served up in your English meadows, under the well-known name of sorrel. The lower animals eat salad. Beasts and birds of prey are said to console their stomachs with grape-husk and salad-herbs. We see our dogs occasionally seeking for a salad on the grass-plot. In discussing the geographical distribution of salad among men — to say nothing of Nebuchadnezzar who was condemned to browse on cold salad, we shall find that in southern Europe whole nations make salad, all the year round, their chief article of diet. In Germany and countries with a German climate, salad, by most people, is eaten only during half the year, and in Russia, perhaps, only a tenth part of the population eat it during a fourth part of the year. Perhaps it is in France that salad is most eaten. Napoleon, during his wars, used to say, that his army wanted nothing to subsist upon but soup and salad. As for the extreme North, where vinegar cannot be fermented, it is a land that knows not salad. The people there, however, do not

feel their loss, for they eat fish, and with fish a salad is not wanted. Let me make solemn exception in the case of soles, which are to be eaten with sliced lemon by enlightened people. Brillat Savarin teaches also that baked pike is not to be thought of without salad. Cold salmon, moreover, is sent up in France with a coquettish little salad, which, in this place, it would be ungrateful to forget.

In a salad, as in the Nature of the ancients, the number of the elements, is four — the herb, the oil, the vinegar, the salt. Eggs, anchovies, herrings, shreds of dried meat, gherkins, capers, olives, Parmesan cheese, slices of lemon, of apple, and of cold potatoes, bacon, cream, and other things, are added in various countries, either to conceal a want of freshness in the herb, or to satisfy a vitiated palate. Hermes gave but four strings to the lyre, and the Ætolians banished Anaximander for wishing to add a fifth. In France and Italy, people are banished or imprisoned for much smaller enormities than the unprincipled innovation which would add a fifth ingredient to salad. A misfortune only equal to the infliction of too many ingredients in a salad, is the possession of too few. Job accounted want of oil among the chief trials of his patience. Salad has a history and a literature of its own, not to be surpassed by any article whatever — not even the Greek article. Josephus simply records that the punishment of Nebuchad-

nezzar consisted in his being condemned to live on salad; but the Baron Von Vaerst, a German writer on the subject, adds in a shrewd annotation, that the punishment lay in the wicked king's salads being unsavoured with oil, vinegar, and salt.

Plautus ("Rudens," Act the Fourth) discourses on the privileges and bliss of wealth. A fisherman finding a cloak-bag in the road, from which he expects to draw a treasure, like the girl with the basket of eggs, he instantly begins to count up the delights he will purchase with the prize. But, lo! on opening the bag, he discovers its contents to be only flax. How does he express the bitterness of his disappointment; what loss does he most deplore? "Farewell," he cries, "ye royal dishes! thou salad, with vinegar and oil, whose taste seemed to be already on my tongue!" Moreover, even the Fathers are not silent on the subject. St. Antony relates that St. Hieronymus, who lived to the green old age of a hundred and five, and during the last ninety years of his life had been supporting himself wholly upon bread and water, could not withstand a certain "lusting after salad." St. Athanasius attests, also, this very important fact. The moderns, again, are enthusiastic upon salad. The Italian poet, Molza, wrote a long poem about salad. Adam, he says, ate the first salad in Paradise. He disdains to compare the warrior's laurel with the salad

of the men of peace. The noblest of sauces are the hand-maidens of salad; and if, therefore, a Roman offered once a fortune to the discoverer of a new sauce, what should be the prize, he asks, for a new salad?

The subject of salad sauce has occupied the attention of various learned men, especially in France. Not only have the specific properties of salt, and oil, and vinegar, been properly inquired into, but also their properties and influences as bearing directly upon herb. The famous chemists, Fourcroy and Chaptal, wrote, each of them, a treatise on the subject. Chaptal wears, in the presence of posterity, a sweet chaplet of salad leaves. The salad à la Chaptal must be sprinkled freely with the oil and vinegar, carefully and discreetly mixed; finally lightly shaken between two sieves, in order that all superfluity of oil or vinegar be suffered to run off. "This done," says the discoverer, "there will remain upon the leaves much oil and little vinegar, enough of each, however, to communicate the true excellency and delicacy of flavour." This is all very well, as far as oil and vinegar may go, but Chaptal has said nothing about salt. The sculptor of King Charles's statue at Charing Cross is said to have forgotten the saddle-girths, and to have put an end to his life in consequence. Chaptal never discovered his omission, perhaps; at any rate he did not commit suicide. The due proportion of salt, however, in a

salad, is a matter of grave importance. Upon this depends no less a matter than whether the salad shall be short and crisp, or flabby and greasy. The great Gaudet dropped pearls of doctrine, but we do not retain a jewel-syllable by which we can be aided on this subject of salt. Concerning the herb, our treatment of it varies with the kind; all, of course, demand an intensity of cleanliness; all should, when clean, be dried affectionately and patted pleasantly between two napkins. Some salads must be handled tenderly, some pulled and pinched about like men's limbs in a Russian bath, some must be cut, some broken, some torn like the Roman salad. Frederic Schlegel says, of Roman salad, that it should be torn to very small shreds, so that it may look like the cumuli, the woolly "female clouds" of Pliny. The hearts of some salads must be taken out and dressed on separate dishes. Rousseau tells us, that for a salad to have the true flavour, it should be dressed by a maiden between fifteen and eighteen years of age.

Rabelais affirms that the best oil to a salad is good humour. The sauce used in the salad of Pope Sixtus the Fifth would please the English better. When this Pope was an obscure monk, he had a great friend in a certain lawyer, who sank into poverty as steadily as the monk rose into popedom. So the poor lawyer, journeying to seek compassion from his old friend the Pope, fell sick by the

wayside, and commissioned his doctor to plead for him with his Holiness." "I will send him a salad," said the Pope, and sent to the sick man, accordingly, a basketful of lettuces. When the lettuces were opened, money was found in their hearts. Therefore the proverb says in Italy, to this day, of a man in need of money from some helping friend, "He wants one of Sixtus the Fifth's salads."

The great Gaudet, whom we have mentioned incidentally, was one of the first victims of that French Revolution which has now lasted more than sixty years, and promises to last for sixty more. Towards the close of the last century, this wonderful man found himself an exile in England without friends or money. Ere long, the most beautiful ladies of the land hung with bright, watchful eyes over his labours; and mouths, accustomed to command the destinies of armies and of nations, watered when he came near. In the houses of the old-fashioned nobility — as that of the late Marquis of Abercorn — the music would play, "See the Conquering Hero comes," when the great Gaudet entered. The talk of a dinner-table lulled into repose before him. Wonder succeeded silence. What an expensive salad dressing-case! What delicacy of touch over the light green leaves! What charming little stories to beguile the moments of suspense! How gracefully and pleasantly he magnified the noble art of salad-

making! The great Gaudet concentrated the entire force of his powerful mind on salad; great, therefore, was his success. Gaudet, like joy, was sought at every feast. He drove in his own cabriolet from dinner to dinner. To secure his services, the high and mighty left cards at his house some weeks before they were required. Have we not seen with our eyes a letter addressed by him to a noble duke, recommending that person to postpone his dinner until nine o'clock, because he, the great Gaudet, was pledged to another noble lord at eight? The fee of the great Gaudet rose to ten guineas; and none who ate his salad grudged the money it cost them.

Near the city of Rome there lived, about the same time, a certain Madam Drake, who also illustrated by her own renown the delightful salad science. With German solemnity she accepted her mission. It was her belief, that salad to be truly fresh, should not be exposed to light until the moment of its being eaten; she, therefore, in a dark room mysteriously performed her office.

Thus much I have written, and have not yet told you how a salad should be made. It cannot be made by telling. You must be born a salad-maker. Salad is a production of taste; it belongs to the Fine Arts, and can no more be acquired by rule than poetry, or sculpture, or painting. You may, indeed, measure, or hew out, or daub off a salad. You may know that lettuce requires very little oil,

and endive very much; that rape needs beetroot and celery; that cold cauliflower is the basis of a delicious salad used very much in Italy, but almost unknown in England; you may know that four table-spoonsful of oil should go generally to one of vinegar; that the salt is a matter to be nervous with; that, above all things, it is necessary to dissolve thoroughly the salt in the vinegar before you add the oil. All this you may know; and you may know how to collect at the right season the right herbs; yet, nevertheless, you must be born a salad-maker, with the full measure of native tact, if you would shine in the profession. It has even been doubted, in the face of the great Gaudet, whether one man can combine in himself all the qualities which go to make a perfect salad-maker; because, to complete a salad properly, is said, in fact, to require the united efforts of four different men: a spendthrift for the oil, a miser for the vinegar, a sage for the salt, and a maniac for the mixing.

A RAINY DAY ON "THE EUPHRATES."

THE 13th of January, 1852, was a decidedly wet day. *You*, reader, as a shadow, not affected by the weather; I, as a motionless, damp substance, under the porch of the Blackwall Railway station, looking up at the immense wet slate in the sky, and down at the few hu-

man sponges whom fate urged, for some motive or other, to a run across the puddles on the pier. The river before us had a languid, sickly look, as if it had just come from swallowing a sewer. As for the opposite shore, utterly flat, it seemed to be depressed entirely, on account of the uncomfortable aspect of the morning.

It was our fancy to come down to Blackwall half-an-hour before the time appointed for embarkation on board the steamer which was to carry us alongside an emigrant ship, "The Euphrates," ready to sail this afternoon, weather permitting. Let us employ the spare half-hour out of the weather's reach, by the fire in the adjacent waiting-room; and over that fire I will tell you for what reason we propose to visit The Euphrates.

Do not believe any one who remarks that they are unlucky in their day, when I tell you that at this moment sixty poor girls out of the wilderness of London, who have scrubbed hard, and stitched hard, trying hard to be honest, but almost in vain, are, under able kindly guidance, quitting the great city. They will arrive here soon, when we will join them. For half-an-hour more they tread English soil. Every day, nearly, has hitherto oppressed their hearts with damp and gloom, like that which is on this day oppressive to our senses. In half-an-hour they lift their feet for ever from a soil that has yielded for them a too scanty measure of its cheer; and

the sails of the good ship Euphrates are to carry them to mended fortune. These poor girls form, in fact, the twentieth and largest party of the needing needlewomen and unprosperous domestic servants sent out by the Right Honourable Sidney Herbert's Female Emigration Fund. The whole number of emigrants despatched by this Fund, on the nineteen previous occasions, has been six hundred and thirty-seven; so, including the present set, about seven hundred poor girls will have been freighted away from poverty and destitution to a land where they are certain of a livelihood.

I now "hold in my hand" (because I have just pulled out of my pocket) an Occasional Paper, published by the Committee of the Female Emigration Fund, containing specimens of letters recently received from emigrants sent out by them. While we await the arrival of the train which is to bring our young friends of to-day, we may profitably spend the little time we have in gossiping about the Home Talk of their predecessors. As for the Fund itself, to be sure there are some wise people who complain of the small scale on which an operation of this kind has to be conducted; who complain that it can exert no influence upon the aspect of our social system, and that by favouring a few women who are sent away in peace, it becomes unjust to those equally deserving objects of compassion who are left behind in trouble. For my own part — it may be eccen-

tricity — I think that if a man can bake but a few batches of bread during a time of famine, it is much better that he should do so, and distribute his few loaves as he is able, than that he should leave his flour in bags unmoistened, because he is unable to make bread enough to feed a people. Let us all do good as we can, and strive on to do ever more; and let those who grumble at the limited means of the Female Emigration Fund prove their sincerity by sending their subscriptions in, so that its means may be less limited in future.

From the emigrants' letters now before us, let me read to you here and there a passage: for the glimpse they give into the "short and simple annals of the poor" is of a kind which will gladden us, and serve, as well as brandy, to keep out the weather.

E. M. had been a needlewoman earning five shillings a week. We may wonder how she lived upon it, until we remember that in many districts of this country able-bodied men receive seven, or sometimes even six shillings a week for the support of themselves, their wives, and families. I lately visited an English parish in which the land is extremely poor, where the whole income of some men, who had families to support, was four shillings a week from daily labour, and eighteen-pence in parish aid. Happy are they who can find means of escaping to a colony where bread is sure, and plenty follows steady-

ness in toil! E. M., the needlewoman, writes from Port Philip to her mother thus: — "I take this opportunity to write these few lines to you, hoping they will find you in good health, as it leaves me at present, thank God; and to inform you that I arrived safe in Melbourne, and that I was three months in service, and that I left to get married, and at the time of writing I am married about six weeks. I am happy to say I am married to a foreigner belonging to America, and I am very happy in my married state."

E. M., one perceives, is of a straightforward turn, and wastes no words in her narration. M. A. W., however, finds a little room for the emotions, though she also writes "these few lines to you, hoping to find you," &c. She had been a poor servant, on the scanty wages of fifteen-pence a week. Oppressed by the happiness of an improved condition, she soon breaks out — "Dear mother, I have been so happy, you don't know; I have had the best of everything since I left London; I have had plum-pudding three times a week, and fresh meat very often." Presently again comes the burden, "Dear mother, I have been so happy, you don't know; I have been waiting on the captain's lady all the passage." Presently it is, "Dear mother, I have oft-times thought of you when I have been sitting down at a good dinner, and my poor sisters and brothers too. Sydney is such a beautiful place I can't say; it's

such a delightful place; mother, I am so delighted!"

From this artless effusion of pleasure, we turn to a letter written from Cape Town by another girl who had been a servant in England upon miserable earnings. Full of delicate fondling, it is a letter to her mother: "My Dear, Dear, Dear, Darling Mother, I now take my pen, &c. Darling Mother, I cannot tell you how uneasy I am at not having heard from you all this long time. For the last six days I have gone to the post-office daily, and to-day the steamer came in, and I went again, fully expecting a letter: I do not remember ever feeling envious before, but when I saw people of all colours, black, white, and grey, with letters in their hands, I certainly did feel as if I should have liked to knock them all down. Dear mother, this is now the fourth letter I have sent you, and I have not heard a word from you, which makes me very uneasy indeed. Darling mother, there are steamers come to England every month," &c. Then she tells her mother of the good place she is in, and of the satisfaction which she gives her master, who has, in consequence, made interest to send to England for her mother and her brother. "Darling mother," writes the girl, "I know the dangers of the sea will not frighten you, for the same God that brought me safe will, I hope, bring you and my brother also. Darling, in this packet you will find a letter for Mrs. Herbert,

and I wish you could take it yourself to her, and then you will hear all about it, darling. Mother, I hope you will come, for we shall all live together, and you will get good wages, and my brother will be well clothed, and be taken care of, and you will not have to work hard here like you do at home. Darling mother, I am always dreaming of you at night, and thinking of you by day, and wondering how you are, and how you look, and whether you have fretted for your little Phœbe; and I shall be sure to know whether you have, and then I shall try to give you a scolding if you have, though I am afraid I shall not be able. Darling mother, don't give my brother any more kisses, for I shall want them all to myself; I am sure I shall be greedy of them." This brother Richard is a child, and Phœbe now goes on to send him playful messages of her affection. The little Phœbe seems to have won for herself, even in England, a good many friends. "I hope you will get ready and come to me soon. O! how I do long for the time when I shall see your dear face! I am sure that I shall want a strait jacket when I do see you again. You know, dear mother, when you come you will not have to seek a home; there is one already for you, and kind hearts to welcome you. Give my love to Martha R., and to Mary and Mrs. C. Darling mother, give my duty to Mrs. W., and ask her to excuse the liberty I have taken in having your letters directed to her house,

but I thought it was the most likely place to find you. Remember me to Mrs. C. Darling mother, remember me to Mrs. M. and Mrs. S.; and if ever you see Mrs. B., give my love to her; and perhaps Mary C. has seen Miriam H.; if she has, give my love to her;" with more of the same kind.

After a little more of this tender home talk, thus the letter ends: "Darling mother, I have plaited a piece of my own hair, knowing you will keep it for my sake; and when you come you will see if it is any longer. I remain your affectionate, loving, and dutiful little daughter, P. H.

"Accept a thousand kisses from me, and give some to my brother — so good-bye; God bless you both."

By aid of Mr. Herbert's committee, the mother really was sent out, and Phœbe had her joy fulfilled.

C. S., another of the seven hundred, writing from Adelaide, says to her mother, "Now you would not know me — I am so fat, red-faced, bright-eyed, and care for no one. This is the place for independent spirits: the labourer is as much thought of as his master; things just as they should be; the country most beautiful; but the country much colder than I expected. How I wish you and the dear children were here! but you would have to rough it sadly for a time, and the boys would have to work very hard. All the work here is very hard, none soft — soft people are no use here. I

have got hardened to it, like the rest; but then for the labour there is good pay, and those who would keep sober might soon get houses and land of their own; but the men drink and gamble, and the women dress, and away goes all the profit." Elsewhere she says, "Many who came out nine or ten years ago are now living independent; and then, again, many do not. But none are poor, and that is one great comfort." C. S., from whom we have been quoting, writes on a grander scale than usual, and asks, in return, for "the latest news — theatrical, political, and so on." From another long letter by her, containing her efforts at description of the new country, we extract a passage; the manner in which she introduces the name of poor Mr. Malthus is amusing: — "The natives are poor, miserable-looking creatures, going about almost naked, and eating all sorts of offal, and are harmless hereabouts, though not so when wild. They are the most hideous sort of folks you can imagine, and much like very old monkeys, and, when wild, go quite naked, which they like best. Government has had houses built for them, but they will not stay in them, and schools for their children, but they will not let them attend They are almost black, but have long silky hair, of which they are very proud. Altogether, one cannot but pity them. There would be a wide field for Mr. Malthus's philanthropy, here, in trying to civilise them — the

young ones, I mean." Poor Mr. Malthus. Here is a touch of sentiment: "Another shop I went in, in the tin-ware line: two men were sitting in the shop, and on the counter was a bottle and three glasses; they had been taking wine with the master, and these seem like drovers do at home. The thunder-storms here are very grand — it echoes from hill to hill — and the lightning is splendid; so is the moonlight." One might be curious to know what train of ideas caused two men, a bottle, and three glasses to suggest a thunder-storm. The letter concludes — "Dear mother, that you may soon come to this land of plenty, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate daughter, CAROLINE."

"P.S. I wish I could write a better description of the place, it is so lovely."

F. A. H., who had been in England a poor servant out of place, writes of Port Philip, "It is a good place for all maids to come to, for they are sure to get a husband. I am not married yet, but I shall be before long, — before you get this, — to a young man who came out in the same ship. There was a mother and four sons and four daughters, and this is one of the sons that I am to have, and — is to have another, and — is to have a third. If you can, prevail on my sisters to come to me, and all shall be done both by me and Richard that can be done to make them happy."

M. S. A. R., who had been a

servant in London at very low wages, begins her letter from Port Philip thus: "We have been here now about ten months, and I have had very good situations, the last of which I left to be married. I was married on the 5th of January last, to Mr. Charles S—, brother to little Jane, as you call her. I have been very comfortable since, and am very contented." Of the said little Jane, the same writer says, that she "has a comfortable good place, and twenty pounds a-year wages."

S. G., (who had been a poor servant-of-all-work) writing by deputy from Bathunga, near Macklesfield, South Australia, about her comfortable place, with kindest love to "My dear Mother and Father," finds some delight in saying, "We burn nothing but wood; there are no grates to clean; no coals are found here." Having described this essential part of the Elysium of a maid-of-all-work, she says: "There are no beggars in the country, and there are no workhouses. Servants need never be out of place, they are much wanted here. I have grown very much; you would not know me, I am so tall and fat. I am very sorry I cannot read or write; be sure and tell my sisters and brothers to make good use of their learning; they do not know what a loss it is. I often think of you day and night."

Here we have but a glimpse into the hearts of a few out of the seven hundred recipients of the blessing offered by Mr. Herbert's Emi-

gration Fund. The glimpse reveals what every true eye may see in any drawing-room, or any alley, if it will but look and learn; that there is a beauty in the human character which never can be quite suppressed. There is not a rascal in the world who has not in him some point loveable. But these poor girls are anything but rascals. Before they can receive aid from the Fund, their character must undergo a searching scrutiny. Beyond the sixty who are coming hither now, there were twenty-five who were found wanting after the strongest recommendation, and there are still five left behind at "the Home," in Hatton Garden, who cannot be sent out until their characters have been more thoroughly determined. The emigrants are girls, who, through privation and temptation, have opposed an honest and comparatively blameless life against the troubles of the world. I hear the whistle of the train. Let us go out; but let me give you notice that you will not find the aspect of these girls so gaunt as it might be, if they came hither directly from their wretched garrets. Each one, as she was accepted, was admitted into "the Home" established by the Fund, where she has been watched and tended by a matron admirably fitted for her office. Here, each has remained, under a gentle discipline, for some weeks. Regular lives, and hearts set more at ease, soon show a good effect upon the bodies of young women, aged, as all these must be, between eighteen and thirty-five. A pleasant strain upon the line of hooks and eyes down many an expanding back, becomes, among the girls, while in "the Home," a theme of comment. In food, the transition from too little to enough, very soon works a change in youthful bodies.

But they are pale still. Let us leave the fire, for, cloaked and hooded, there they all are hurrying through the rain to stand under that roof, which four posts lift up, in the centre of the pier, to make exposure of its craziness! Either the roof is wretched, or the day is wretched, or they are both wretched together; for the roof is wet through, and can do no more than give a flavour to the rain which soaks through, on the sixty girls, packed, while they wait until the steamer shall arrive, under that clumsy bit of shelter. In the slate of the sky no crack is to be seen; it is high water in the puddles, and low water in the Thames; we must go down stairs to the floating barge before we can embark. There she is — a Gravesend boat. "Now, girls!" Who speaks to them? A clergyman, by his white neckcloth; a Christian, by his kindly face, which looks like a small piece of fine weather under that umbrella, which defends it from the rain.

A man of years, not without winter on his head, and with a pleasant summer in his heart. It is the same clergyman, some recognition of whose labours in an Eastern parish has become part of

our Household Words.* We had not been prepared to meet him here; but here he is, brimful of work, just now field marshal, and about to board the steamer with his troop. We have been looking at his soldiers. The emotion natural to such a crisis in their lives, has spread an uniform expression of much gentleness over the faces of these women. Though, to be sure, while huddled thus beneath the bit of roof, they have been variously occupied; some, talking to their friends who come to bid good-bye; one, smiling at the ridiculous behaviour of a sandwich, which insists on yielding all its meat at the first bite, emigrating from the mustardy embrace of the remaining bread; and many fingers, as all fingers that are feminine will do however rough with labour, are adjusting faded shawls, perking up neat woollen cloaks, part of the outfit given in the Home to those who may be destitute; protecting necks against the weather, or twiddling with mutual care, one over the outline of another's bonnet. Yet, however slight, or to outward seeming frivolous, may be the occupation of these girls, the deep importance of this hour to all of them, has put an under-tone of seriousness and a sign of concealed feeling into every face; we look on, and forget the rain. The women, too, are thinking, and they forget the rain; and we are

all aroused by the kind wrath of the good field marshal, who is expostulating with members of his troop as they pass down towards the steamer, for getting their feet wet by thoughtlessly — or rather out of excess of thoughtfulness — neglecting to beware of puddles.

We are on board; boxes are coming after us, and long mysterious packages belonging to some emigrants; of which, in a hundred years, we never could, by guessing, find out the contents. "Now, then, don't stand about. Out of the rain, girls; get down out of the rain!" The kindly marshal has no peace till he has seen the last bonnet cleared away from deck. Here we perceive that he is aided by a woman who is not young; and who, going out as emigrant herself, is appointed to be matron on the voyage. Now, all is ready, and through pertinacious rain the "Meteor" proceeds to Gravesend.

On the way we may make acquaintance with our friends. There are the ordinary passengers of the Gravesend boats, and there are certain earnest gentlemen who come as working members of the charity. You will find Mr. Sidney Herbert at a table in the cabin, busily engaged with fellow-labourers in folding copies of a letter that is to be given to each girl on her departure. Perhaps it will occur to you, that English gentlemen, who leave the luxuries of home to travel down the cheerless river on this miserable day — who work so eagerly and

* "What a London Curate can do if he tries." — "*Household Words*," vol. IV., page 333.

steadily, with mind and body—are almost as well employed as they might be if they behaved like proper squires, and bent their energies on the provision of a hare for dinner. Perhaps you think there are more manly sports than one, or half-a-dozen, and that it is not the least manly occupation in which an English gentleman can be engaged, to be the helper of weak girls, who are battling, in an overcrowded city, against the temptations brought by helpless poverty; to be their helper, noth with a purse only, but in person; and, while removing them from danger, to speak human words into their ears. You may think it not the least advantage of this kind of manly sport, that it is one which, not the man only, but his wife with him, can enjoy; and you will call to mind the names of English ladies, through whose sympathy—in this one charity alone, drop, as it is, in the great sum of good—many a weary heart has left off aching. Now, we have had a little talk, moreover, with the matron of the Home in Hatton Garden, and we are not surprised to find some of the girls flitting tenderly about her. She does not talk philanthropy; but we feel that she is active as a bird, and full of tact and woman's feeling. She was at work until four this morning, full of preparation, and, after two hours' sleep, she got up, and, among other little odd jobs, cut sandwiches for sixty.

We hear, too, over other talk, from one of the committee, how,

yesterday, when the matron had gone out, he called at the Home, found the women locked up, and knocked some time before they let him in upon a scene of tears. They were enjoying a good cry on the eve of their departure. And we hear how Mary B—, who had arrived six weeks ago a wretched object, had now almost forfeited her identity by getting such a mask of fat. We are told how Letitia D— had been with a bad mother in a miserable home; but was a tender-hearted girl, and, when she went out, used to return to the new Home and the new mother, flushed and out of breath with hurrying, lest she should overstay, for one minute, her leave of absence. We pick up the history of Rose F—, from whose face the thinness and the haggard look have not been yet expunged; that she writes rather elegantly, and is a first-rate embroideress, and that her business was to embroider, elaborately, dress waistcoats at eighteen-pence a piece. We learn, also, that of such embroiderers and fineworkers the trade is greatly spoilt by the large number of young ladies of the middle class—prosperous tradesmen's daughters—who take such work from the tailors, for the sake—not of food, but pocket-money. We find, that besides a surgeon and his wife, who go out with the emigrants, and intend settling at Sydney, they have a chaplain, a married man. The chaplain is sent out to be a missionary at the diggings.

Now let us dive into the cabin where the poor girls are. How closely those who have relations here are nestling by their side! How quiet they all are! So quiet, in a room which contains more than sixty women. Some of the Gravesend male passengers are smoking, and as I happen to be nice about the flavour of tobacco, which I take at second hand, we will, if you please, go up into the rain again.

Yonder is Euphrates, a fine vessel, just now swinging at her anchor, so we do not go alongside, until we have filled up a little time beside the coal hulk, while the steamer takes in coals. The feminine cloud rises and gathers about us. Their friend, the field marshal, understands their hearts, and resigns his staff, permitting his army, without one word of expostulation, to forget the rain. The weather-beaten stubby captain, catching us in a corner, privately communicates to us his own opinion. "Them gals would be much better down out of the rain, but they *will* be after looking at the ship that is to carry 'em." And the old fellow speaks as if he understood it all, and talks, after his own fashion of gentleness, as if the entire army of sixty were his single sweetheart, and he loved her even for her wilfulness.

But now we are at last alongside the Euphrates. Now for the climbing up the precipice of a paddle-box, and the bold march,

or hesitating tread, or pretty mince, across the mountain bridge of a plank into the ship. Into the ship the poor girls troop, and out of it may Heaven guide their feet to peace, when they step forth upon a land more able than this over-crowded London, to appreciate their merits and reward their toil!

Again, there is wild work with the packages. That is the chaplain upon yonder coil of rope, busily making acquaintance with his fellow labourer, the emigrating matron. The field marshal resumes his staff, and orders his army out of the rain again, into the cabin prepared for their permanent reception. The field marshal's staff is a carpenter's rule now, if you please. Where happiness is to be spread, and good is to be done, our friend is as busy as a newly-awakened child at play. He breaks upon us from all sides. He is the author and contriver of all the carpentering that has been done to increase the comfort of the girls. To keep out the rain there is a structure over the hatches, which very much reminds us, as to its entrance, of the entrances to negro huts — described by a Niger traveller, "high in the threshold, and low in the roof, contrived so as to break both the head and the shins together." Those of us who are tall, enter by a worm-like motion through this temporary burrow; and, once below, are agreeably surprised at noticing how very ample—as ships

go — is the space allotted to this little colony.

A spacious cabin is contrived exclusively for the occupation of the sixty girls; whose berths are around the walls. Tiny rooms are manufactured in it, cabins for the surgeon and his wife, the chaplain and his wife, and one for somebody's wife's sister. There are also other conveniences for these female emigrants upon their own domain. Within this great cabin, our amateur carpenter, upholsterer, factotum, has poured out a whole cornucopia of thoughtful notions. From the beams down to the pepper-casters, he has been at the bottom of every detail. All round the room a curtain-rod is run before the berths, and curtains are now being unpacked and suspended. These will separate, upon the voyage, the sleepers from the wakers. Then, there are rows of tables and forms, and there are sly tables up near the ceiling, which are shelves at night, and which slide down over the pillars and make writing-tables in the day. And there are hooks everywhere, and there is a miraculous cupboard system; and there are the lamps to unpack. But where are the knives and forks? for the girls presently will want their dinner.

Those two casks are full of water, a supply in addition to the ship's allowance for the comfort of the women under the equator; those big jars contain also an

extra supply of lemon-juice. That great box is full of stationery. Those of the emigrants who cannot write or read, will be taught during the leisure of the voyage, and all will be encouraged to write letters. The other huge box is crammed with materials for stitch-work. As much of that as the girls please to do, they will be paid for when they get to Sydney. For each common striped shirt that is made, its maker will have threepence to receive. Needles, thread, thimbles — yes, there is everything on board.

Since it is too wet for the deck, the women have their friends and relations down in the cabin with them. We pass through, and at the other end await Mr. Herbert — the bishop of the business, as the missionary (after his clerical way of being funny) just now called him. Then the emigrants sent out by the Fund are summoned in their order, and to each, as she comes, is given one of those circular letters which were folded in the cabin, and which is presently to be read aloud to all of them. Each is asked whether she can read or write. Many cannot write, or write imperfectly; these are advised to use the opportunity they have of being taught on the voyage out; and to each emigrant a directed envelope is given, in which she is to put a letter containing information to Mrs. Stuart Wortley or Mrs. Herbert, of her progress and prospects in the colony. We look at the girls as

they come up one by one, and fancying the bit of colour that will come after a four-months' voyage, and looking forward to the time when, with healthy work and ample food, they will become "so fat and bright-eyed, you don't know" — we prophesy husbands for more than half of them, if men in Australia have at all an eye to what they are about. This business being done, Mr. Herbert rises, and, with head uncovered, reads to them the letter that has been addressed to each. Having read this, he proceeds to enlarge upon its contents in language plain and earnest; all are very still, and the old wrinkled head of one girl's father, thrust from behind a beam, looks with the fixedness of a Dutch picture at the speaker.

The object of the speech and of the circular is to request each girl to write an account of herself soon after her arrival. To urge upon all, cheerfulness and forbearance towards one another, and obedience to rules during the voyage. To point out to them the great boon of four months' leisure, which it is in their power to improve, by acquiring, where they need it, knowledge of reading or of writing, most important aids to their prosperity. To advise them strongly, to be guided on their arrival by the counsel of the Government Inspector, who will be made acquainted with their names and qualities, and can, from his local knowledge, warn them against the invitations of improper masters; reminding them, that, if by chance any of them do not get immediate situations, they will be duly cared for by the Fund until they were properly provided. Mr. Herbert reminds them that, while a free passage is given to each of them, in order that they may not in a new colony be burdened with a debt, yet that they owe a debt of gratitude to God; and if they prosper, they will do well, out of their prosperity, to assist the Fund which has blessed them, by such offerings as they may choose to save, for the purpose of promoting the welfare of others who remain here in distress. At this point, do you observe how yonder pretty-looking girl compresses her lips in a determined way, and looks intelligently at her neighbour? The emigrants are then informed that any one of them upon saving so much money as will pay half the passage, will be entitled to claim of the Fund all else that is necessary to bring over any relative who is a fit person, and for whom she feels that she can find a place. And at this point the pretty little girl beams out, and whispers to her neighbour a few happy syllables. *She* means to save, as any mole might see. The speaker finally having given other useful information and advice, now concludes, with cordial and emphatic good wishes. As his frank voice ceases, there is not a round of applause, after your public dinner-table fashion, but a sound like the loosening of many suspended breaths, and faint —

because they come from deep down in the heart—faint whispers of "Thank you, Sir!"

And now our venerable and child-hearted factotum is told that he must say a few words to his troop. He goes straight to their hearts, and their looks show that he has been that way before. A very Martha, full of cares, he has a great deal to tell them about their housekeeping, and about what they must do to make a comfortable, and, to minds and bodies, profitable voyage. He, too, ends with his blessing on their exodus, and to him, too, the reply is a gentle breath of "Thank you, Sir!" And then the girls begin to whisper to each other, and you see by their looks of whom they talk, and how they talk of him. They seem to dwell with a half-playful, half-patronising love upon the old man's child-like heart, while they look up with trust and reverence to its pure earnestness of manly labour.

Now comes the Government Inspector on the scene, and the relations have to go on deck; but he must wait awhile, for after the two speeches, there is a strong tendency to cry, scattered abroad—tears to be honoured and respected. Here is the doctor, who has found the chaplain, and they are deep in talk, establishing good-fellowship. The doctor, a fine, stout, handsome fellow; the chaplain, pale and thin, must trust to his spiritual force when he shall come hereafter to "the diggings." Then the chaplain is

busy with the steward, dropping a sovereign over the agitation of bill-settling; and, when he is gone, his wife comes to the steward, and talks, and in five minutes she has cheapened something, and communicates to her husband, who approaches, the salvation of eighteen-pence. Next to salvation of souls, it is to be feared that even a missionary to the gold country will have time to feel that to save pence is important.

Now the girls pass in review before the Government Inspector as their names are called. And after this, our working clergyman, who has among these emigrants some of his flock out of the poor Eastern parish, is hauling pots and pans about, diving among the emigrants, and repeating all manner of last words and instructions; and we wander quietly among the crowd, overhearing, as we pass, true words of appreciation which were not meant to flatter his own ear. There is a lunch in the cabin, but our friend is too busy to be dragged away to it; we stay with him. At last, as he is waited for, he is compelled to go. The emigrants' friends are all again down stairs, and we go up into the rain, and into the cabin on deck, and there is lunch. The steamer is to carry us away at half-past three. We, too, if you please, will slip away quietly from this lunch, and fill up the remainder of our time below, where we shall see the girls at dinner. They are all seated, now,

in order at their tables, and have wiped away their tears. They make room for fathers and sisters by their sides; their platters are before them, and they wait patiently. It was well that the good matron foresaw the advantages of her sixty sandwich papers. She is here among her charge now, hard at work. She will sleep well to-night. There is a pathos in the pervading gentleness occasioned by the feelings of the hour. The old clergyman is down again. He, too, has slipped away, and come to his poor friends. Now for the dinner. Here is a man with three watering-pots, who declares that "*they* will never be the things to hold ship's soup. You can't pour carrots out of them narrow spouts." The general manager looks grieved at the notion that he should ever have imagined such a thing. "Those cans," he says, "are for tea, or hot water. What is it you want for soup?" — "Flat dishes," says the cook. — "Well, I have provided plenty of flat dishes," says the store-master, appealing to the matron. "I cannot find them, Sir, and I've tried very hard," the matron says. "Come, come, let *me* try; where is the key?" Accordingly, the indefatigable old gentleman plunges into the doctor's cabin, which is at present half full of tin utensils; and a tremendous disturbance becomes audible among the pots and pans. The flat dishes are soon produced out of the bottom of the pyramid. And now for dinner!

Roast beef, potatoes, soup — more beef; a polite, and heartily kind voice of a great sailor from above us, as he hands his dish down with a cry of "More soup, ladies!" We walk among them, eavesdroppers again. A wonderful production of salt-cellars, metal tea-cups, and all kinds of unexpected things, by their thoughtful friend, the clergyman, causes that person to be watched with pleasant curious eyes, as though he were a conjuror, extracting wonders out of nothing. Here, a voice cries, "Look, look; *do* look at the little pepper-boxes!" There, a voice is murmuring, "It will be our fault if we are not contented;" and, throughout, there is evident a very lively sense of this minute thoughtfulness, which is, by no means, so little a matter in its influences as to some it may appear. Here, is a girl who glances at a thin creature, sitting at another table, and calls the attention of a neighbour to her. "There is poor Annie helping the potatoes;" and, by the tone and looks of these two girls, you see that they regard poor Annie, for some reason, with peculiar sympathy, and seem to be of opinion that, after all she may have suffered, they would like, if possible, to spare her even the fatigue of ladling out the potatoes while she is at dinner.

But, after all, there is not much eaten at this dinner; the hearts are all too full. And, before it is over, the steamer is alongside, and the unfinished food is left,

and all the girls, heedless of rain and unbonneted, are upon deck for the last accents of farewell. Pleasant it is to see the matron made a prisoner of love, unable to get free of the fingers which fond girls put out to her, who had given them perhaps the first sense of home comfort. A stout girl, clinging resolutely to a sister who must go on board the steamer, is standing on the plank and blocks the way; she is warned off — not gruffly, far from it. And, though she holds here place, and clings about her sister, caring most for the few minutes left for that embrace, and little for all the world else just then, (though she tries to make way for the other passengers,) nobody warns her off again. We all contrive to pass without disturbing her. At length the steamer has put off, the emigrant girls climb to where they can get the last look of the friends whom they may see no more. There are attempts at parting cheers, in which they seem to choke; there is a mutual waving of handkerchiefs and hats: a mutual and complete good-will. The sailors, who have all gathered in the bow of the ship, give three cheers of a louder sort to the departing steamer, and to-morrow morning early the Euphrates will set sail.

THE MILLER AND HIS MEN.

HALF a century ago affairs were in a dismal state for bread-eaters.

Some people thought it was a question whether, in a little while, there would be any bread to eat at all. The landlords were everywhere obtaining Inclosure Bills, and this afforded some hope of a better supply hereafter; and the excessive dearness of bread inclined a good many land-owners, and some few farmers, to attend to what such men as Sir H. Davy had to set about improving the productiveness of land, by putting into it the ingredients required for the composition of wheat and other grains. Manuring the land is so familiar a matter to us now, that we are apt to forget how new a thing it is. Or, if it be true that the old monks, centuries ago, taught the art of manuring, to make orchards and kitchen-gardens productive, the farmers of England did not carry out the practice in their fields, or dream of the connexion between the stuff they spread over the ground and the plant that was to come out of it. These farmers laughed when, in 1800, they saw a few land-owners putting bone manure upon their land, at the instigation of philosophers. They were well off, and did not want any change. Wheat was at one hundred and fifteen shillings and eleven-pence per quarter: why should they want any change? There was the tradesman in the town, however, who was beginning to wonder what would become of his children, if some change did not come. He was paying one shilling and tenpence each for quartern

loaves; and ninepence per pound for meat; and every great article of his expenditure was two, three, four, or five times as high as when he married. Then, there was the housewife, trying to make good bread with only half the quantity of flour, and the rest potatoes, or other vegetable matter, which may be very good under their own names, but are disagreeable when they make our bread clammy or heavy. The flour itself was often very bad. There was not enough wheat brought in from distant countries to mix with our own; and in such bad seasons as had followed each other from 1795 to 1800, our own wheat was wretched stuff. It was so desperately wanted that it was ground and eaten damp and new. We never see such bread now as even the upper classes had to eat then. Some of the work-people gave up bread, and made into porridge such flour as they could still get. Many got none at all. Many went out into the lanes, and along the ditches for nettles, and any roots, and berries, and herbs, that they could eat. But what are herbs — the best herbs — without salt? and upon salt there was a duty of fifteen shillings per bushel. What would the people of Birmingham have said, at that time, if they had been told that in half a century the population of their town would have more than trebled, while the price of wheat would have fallen to one-third of what they were paying then?

We pick out Birmingham from

among the suffering towns, and that period from the mournful course of years of the war, because there and then arose an establishment suited to the popular need, which is sufficiently remarkable to be put upon record. This establishment has been imitated at Birmingham; but, at this day, there is (as far as we can learn) nothing like it in any other town in England. In 1795, when wheat was damp and mouldy, and flour was sour, and the inside of the loaf was a loathsome mess of grey sticky paste, a company was formed at Birmingham, for the purpose of supplying the town with good flour and good bread. The millers and bakers did not like the scheme, of course; but the inhabitants did; at least during the years of scarcity which followed the opening of the Union Mills. We are told that it was a pleasant sight, — in those days before we were born, — the vans laden with wholesome bread, going through the streets in the morning, and dropping the loaves as they went. The establishment was hated, was persecuted, was mobbed, was reduced to a very low point of adversity; and, in 1809, it was prosecuted in the name of the king, on the plea that it was illegal, and injurious to the interests of the millers and bakers of Birmingham. The finding of the jury was looked to with great and wide-spread curiosity; the whole affair was such a novelty. The jury found that the object of the company was laudable; that the

town had been much the better for the good flour and bread which they had provided, and which had often been really out of the reach of single millers and bakers, or small firms; and, finally, that the interests of the millers and bakers had suffered in the competition with the aggregate capitalists of the company.

The company fell so low at one time that its one pound shares were to be had in abundance for half-a-crown each. The wisely bought up most of the depreciated shares, knowing their town well enough to be sure that their concern must, sooner or later, answer well there, though no one could say as much of any other place. Their confidence was justified. As their profits increased — slowly and quietly — they were allowed to lay them by; for the shares were so small that the profits were hardly worth looking after by the scattered holders. Last year, their capital (exclusive of their mills and apparatus) amounted to twenty-four thousand pounds; and a division of profits has recommenced. In the course of their ascent to prosperity, they sold more and more flour, as well as bread; and their spreading trade began to invade that of millers within a considerable range of country. Among others, the Lucys of Stratford-upon-Avon (a name and place for ever associated in men's minds) found their business injured by this great Birmingham company. Instead of grumbling

and growling, and going to law, the Messrs. Lucy, father and sons, bravely stepped into Birmingham, and set up mills of their own — fairly trying to divide the custom of the growing town with the original association. In this they succeeded. Others have followed their example; and there are now four mill establishments in Birmingham belonging to private firms, besides two which are the property of companies. There are peculiarities about Mr. Lucy's establishment, and his methods, which mark it out for observation, in preference to others. We have surveyed the whole of it, and have found some curious things there which are to be seen nowhere else.

Before we tell what we have seen, however, we must explain why it is that these establishments are confined to Birmingham — why the same reasons which maintain them there, do not call up similar works in other towns.

The fact is, the working-classes of Birmingham have a remarkable fancy for buying what they want at the small hucksters' shops, of which there are an infinity in the town. One would like to know how many of these hucksters' shops there are in the midst of this population of two hundred and thirty-two thousand people. Whichever way one turns in the streets, one sees a shop in which the housewife may buy bread and thread, bacon and shoes, cheese and knitting-needles, or whatsoever it may be that she

wants. In such a shop it was that a little child once made its demand — unintelligible to a stranger's ear. Laying down a penny on the counter, the little creature sang out, "Farden tate, farden teed, farden lang tannen, farden aden;" and she received a cake, a skein of thread, a long candle, and a farthing of change — "again." The purchasers at these shops seem to be always forgetting that they must pay for the prodigious waste of time that they require from the seller, and for the paper and string used up in an infinity of small parcels; for, in short, all the waste of the ultimate degree of retailing. Easy and careless, and usually well employed, large numbers of the people despise the higher and better ease which would be secured by sensible economy — and buy their sugar, and butter, and tea, by the ounce; their thread, by the skein; their ham, by the pound; their apples, by the pennyworth; seduced by the convenience of such ways to the thoughtless, and yet more by the credit given at these hucksters' shops. The one thing that the workmen of Birmingham (so clever in so many ways) seem wholly unable to do, is to keep their affairs well in hand. Whatever they may be earning, they are always anticipating. If they can get their wages in advance, they do; and whether they can or not, they ask and obtain credit at these hucksters' shops — a week's credit at all events, and, too often, very much more. For this, and the hucksters' losses from bad debts, in consequence, they have to pay in the price of what they buy. Yet the people stick to the hucksters, and the hucksters continue to thrive by the improvidence of the people, through all changes of times; and, as a consequence, Birmingham goes on to be distinguished by its peculiar possession of bread-mills.

From these mills hucksters supply themselves. Every morning, at seven o'clock, three waggons draw up below certain folding-doors on the upper floor of Mr. Lucy's mill, and are filled, once and again, with loaves from the racks where the bread has been cooling — fragrant, fresh loaves, which will all be eaten before night. These are dropped at the hucksters' shops, the money received on the instant, and deposited in the counting-house on each return of the empty waggons. The twenty or forty loaves, paid for by the huckster in the morning, will be carried to twenty or forty homes, in a few hours — in company with candles and cheese, ink and writing-paper, nails and soap, and every odd thing that can be thought of.

The fluctuations in the trade of the mills are a curious subject of inquiry. Flour is sold at these mills, as well as bread; and when the sale of bread falls off, that of flour usually increases in proportion. All being well with the millers, at all events, we are at liberty to look at the case. At present, the sale of bread from

the mills has fallen off prodigiously, while that of flour is flourishing. Bread is cheap: the people are prosperous: they eat more meat, and puddings, and vegetables, and various luxuries, than in bad times; and, of course, less bread; and the bread that they do eat they go to the bakers' for. They like it new; and, as they can pay for it, they get it new. Of course, the bakers want more flour from the mills, to supply this demand. As soon as bread becomes dearer, more will be sold from the mills. Other provisions rise in price when bread rises; less meat, less pudding, less vegetables are eaten, and more bread. From the same cause, there will be an increased demand for bread whenever wages fall, whether the price of provisions rises or not. Mr. Lucy's mill did, at one time, send out as much as five hundred sacks of flour per week, in the shape of loaves; and it is supposed that the Union Mills even now send out as much as four hundred and fifty sacks; but this is little in comparison with what the sales amount to in hard times.

Being curious to know what was the proportion of bread sent out by the mills, in comparison with the supply furnished by bakers and by private ovens, we obtained an approximate calculation from a well-qualified informant, and found that the bakers, at present, bake about one thousand five hundred sacks of flour per week; the mills about one thousand; and private ovens nearly as much as

the bakers. The larger calculation by the year, averages something like this: — the consumption of flour is reckoned at about a sack per head for the whole population, which is two hundred and thirty-two thousand. The bakers send out nearly half of this; viz., about one hundred thousand sacks; the mills about sixty thousand; and private ovens consume the remaining seventy-two thousand.

And now for Mr. Lucy's mill, which we have mentioned as distinguished by some peculiarities. These peculiarities are inventions of his own, by which the production of bread is raised to the rank of an established Birmingham manufacture. Everybody knows the services which Mr. Lucy, as Mayor of Birmingham, rendered to the Great Exhibition last year. Many wish that his dough machine, and other contrivances, could have been exhibited there; but they could not have been worked in the Crystal Palace. They must be seen at home.

We will go first to the top of the mill, without looking or listening as we go, and come down through the successive processes, from the bringing in of the wheat to the sending out of the bread.

At the top there is the crane, by which the sacks of wheat are hauled up from the canal below — the muddy, rippling canal, on which we peep down from the landing stage in the top story. Up comes the wheat through that door — wheat from the far interior of Russia, from the plains of Hun-

gary, from the slopes of Italy, from the valleys of France — to be destroyed as wheat. It has grown for a long time, and travelled very far, to be put an end to here. The garners of the mill are on this story, and we see huge assemblages of fat sacks.

Next below are the mill-stones, pair after pair, each fed by its hopper. The funnels of these hoppers are made spies and informers. As soon as the heap of grain on which the funnel rests, and which it feeds, sinks too low, the funnel presses upon a strap which rings a bell, and proclaims that somebody is negligent. The mill-stones are a valuable property, difficult to obtain, but very durable. They come from a particular part of France; although, very lately, the proper kind of stone has been found also in Belgium. They will stand the wear and tear of forty years, with proper dressing and care. The dressing of the mill-stones is a curious sight. A highly skilled workman is needed for this business. He kneels, with one knee upon the stone, tapping with his sharp chipper in a way which looks like mere trifling to the eyes of the ignorant. But his tiny grooves come out clear at last; and the slopes and risings of the one stone, co-operating with those of its fellow, act like a series of scissors. There are sixteen pairs of stones at work here, one pair of which is from Belgium.

All the upper rooms in the mill look picturesque, with posts, sup-

ports, and cross-pieces. We are struck, however, with little doors here and there in these square beams; little buttons, grooves, and other mysteries; and it turns out that these are all spouts, through which the meal and flour are carried up and down, and round, and all manner of ways. Anything can fall down of itself; but every thing here, from dust to dough, has to be carried up by main force. The dust is easily managed. A tall chimney exhausts the air, and the dust is carried out, to powder the birds of the air. It is carried out so regularly and completely, that the men in the mill work in a clear atmosphere, and the machinery does not get choked. If wheat or flour must be carried aloft, it is by what is called in breweries a Jacob's ladder — a system of little cups or jars, revolving, like the chambers of a water-wheel, and catching up their cargo, conveying, and finally spilling it, in their incessant revolution. Down one spout comes wheat to be purified for grinding. So bad are the threshing floors of the world, that much dirt comes in with wheat, and even such an amount of stones as would astonish a novice. The wheat, therefore, is made to fall smartly upon an inclined plane of wire, through which the pure grain falls in one direction, and small dirt in another, while the stones hop, skip, and jump into a trough at the lower end. Down another spout comes the meal from the Russian wheat; down another from the

Hungarian; and so on. The spouts end in boxes; which, when a valve is opened, spill their contents upon a strip of felt, that is perpetually moving on towards a drum. It passes round this drum, spilling its little heaps of flour, and returning empty below, to turn round another drum at the other end of the row, and to come back under the boxes, to receive another burden, and carry it away.

This mixing process is pretty; but there is another process, which is prettier, and quite as new; being a recent invention of Mr. Lucy. A very long and wide sheet of cloth is stretched horizontally, about three feet from the ground, and boarded round, so as to make it keep its contents to itself. At each end, the cloth slopes down into a pit. Flour of various kinds dribbles down upon the sheet from spouts above, making little heaps, which are to be swept into one receptacle. A wooden scraper, lodged upon wheels, which run in grooves along the sides of the sheet, is perpetually running backwards and forwards, from one end of the expanse to the other, knocking down the little heaps of flour, carrying them all before it, and driving the mass into the pit at either end. This scraper is worked, like everything else in the mill, by the steam-engine. The engine itself shows us more of Mr. Lucy's ingenuity. He has contrived some apparatus, by which he dispenses with the fly-wheel of his engine, and yet obtains a perfect regulation of the power. This is a low-

pressure engine, of forty-horse power, in connexion with a high-pressure one of twenty-five, which spares its steam to its neighbour. In connexion with the bakehouse, there are two smaller engines. It is a new and strange idea, — that of overcoming the tenacity of dough by steam-power, instead of by the battery of the cook's limbs. We shall see presently how this is done. The large upper room, where the mixing of the flour goes on, is called the Pestry, — nobody knows why. We have no ideas in connexion with the word; but we put it down because it is rather pretty than otherwise.

We are now to see the bread-making; we wish we could say the baking too; but that work is done in the small hours of the night, when it would be in no way convenient or agreeable, to ourselves or others, that we should make an expedition to any bake-house, however eminent and curious.

We come down through a remarkably picturesque room, joined at right angles, so that the light falls well upon an intricacy of spouts on the one hand, and on regiments of sacks on the other. One more step-ladder conducts us to the yard, where there is a pit, with one side very fiery. The mouths of the furnaces open into that pit, because the heat is economised by the furnaces being underground. The two small engines may, of course, be found at home in their apartments, close at hand.

Everybody knows that one of the housewife's cares in life, is

yeast. Every passing year gives birth to receipts for securing good yeast, or to suggestions for doing without it. It is found in London that there is great comfort in doing without yeast, when the baker is enough of a chemist to set his bread to ferment properly by other methods. The great Birmingham millers would be very glad to ferment their bread by some agency less capricious than that of yeast; but the Birmingham bread-eaters like their own old ways. They like their old-fashioned bitter bread, and complain of London bread for being insipid. The Londoners, on their part, make faces at the bitterness of Birmingham bread. The great bread-makers do what they can. They deal with the best brewers, and keep close watch over the yeast. Mr. Lucy's dough-house is protected from cold by the engine-house on the north, and the bake-house on the south; and the thermometer is for ever in hand. If frosty weather hurts the working of the beer, and spoils the yeast, and if the customers will have yeast bread, there is no help for it: the eaters must put up with a bad batch in bad weather. Of adulteration there seem to be no complaints; and we are assured that there is scarcely any such thing in the town. Happy Birmingham! If bakers' customers will have extraordinarily white fancy bread, the bakers must use some alum instead of salt.

In a corner, is a pile of blocks of salt — powdery blocks, neat

oblong squares, like excessively white bricks. On the other hand are the boiler and tank. Before us is the great curiosity of the place, the dough machine; and we can see at once that the flour is to be poured into it from the long hopper above. Here we have the water, the salt, and the flour. Where is the yeast? O! here it comes, in that tall tin measure, which would nearly hold a man. A fat boy of fourteen would about fill it. Now for the bread-making!

The engines turn two axles in a large trough. These axles are set with crooked steel bars, which make a sort of *chevaux-de-frise*, an apparatus for pulling the dough all manner of ways when the axles are set revolving, with some range, moreover, along the trough. Flour is rained, in a short deluge, from the hopper into the trough: two men, who have been mixing warm and cold water by the guidance of a thermometer, in a monstrous bucket, sling a hook to the handle, and crane the bucket to the edge of the trough (which is about as high as their heads), tilt it over, and souse the water among the flour.

Then, bowlful after bowlful of yeast is poured into a sieve, held over more water of the due warmth. A man takes up a block of salt, whirls his arm round in the great pail, mixing the yeast and water, and salting them by the same operation. The frothing bucket is hauled to the trough, in like manner with the first; and so on till the yeast is used up, to

the last rinsings, and the proper quantity of water is supplied. Then the trough is boarded up, to prevent the escape of flour; the axles are put in gear; the *chevaux-de-frise* revolves; the dough is pulled and torn; and, in return for its torment, it gives out a seething, hissing sound, very pleasant to healthy eaters of wholesome bread. More flour is rained down as it is wanted. The kneading is soon done; such a force as this being thus regularly applied.

Perhaps the oddest sight of all is the removal of the dough. Little vats, on wheels, are run under the trough; a board at the bottom of the trough is shifted, and the dough oozes down, in grotesque masses. The thing is on so large a scale, that we were reminded at once of a scene on the stage. We saw before us a cave, with a roof of stalactites — only the stalactites were oozing down like a waterfall. The men help the descent of the dough, and then scrape the *chevaux-de-frise* perfectly clean. The trough is shut up, and the little vats are wheeled away to warm corners, where the dough is to rise at its leisure. It rises in about an hour and a half; is allowed to fall three times; and, at the end of two hours and a quarter, is craned up in its vat to the floor above, and let drop through the hopper into the trough, to be there mixed with as much more water and salt, and flour, as it needs.

The room where it is worked into loaves is like what one fan-

cies the kitchen of a great old monastery. The place is large, rather low and dark, with prodigious boards, sprinkled with flour, and eight ovens ranged along one side, — ovens of a marvellous capacity. They stretch far away into the wall; and very long are the poles, with spade-like ends, called "peels," which are used for transacting business at the further extremity of these warm, arched caverns, where the crickets, in a crowd, are chirping merrily. When baked, the loaves are ranged in racks, in another chamber, to part with their steam. Each shelf contains a hundred loaves; and the room may contain two thousand, which can be handed into the waggons, and despatched in twenty minutes.

It really is a pleasant thing to take up the wholesome new twopenny loaf — retailed at twopence half-penny — and think from how many parts of the world grain has been contributed to make it, and see and feel what a goodly portion the buyer has for his money. It is not exactly pleasant to see lumps and crusts of bread lying in the gutters, and kicked about on the pavement, as one may now see at Birmingham; because it is never pleasant to see sheer waste, while it is certain that there are always some who have not enough to eat. But the evidences of plenty are very cheerful throughout the place; and (as seems to be a natural consequence) there is very little crime — so little, that the spirits of the moralist and the

lover of his kind might rise to an unprecedented point, if it were not too certain that, with the next visitation of adversity, want and crime will recur. The open-hearted and light-headed work-people will not, as a body, take warning from past trials. Some — many — lay by a portion of their present earnings; but the greater number are as childish in pleasing themselves to-day, without thought of to-morrow, as if they had never known what it was to hunger themselves, or to shudder at a neighbour's crimes. Rich spend-thrifts are visited with curses for the social injury that they inflict. Cursing does no good, against high or low; but a remonstrance — now — in the day of prosperity — when it cannot be mistaken for a taunt, may be worth trying; and, to begin with a small particular, we would suggest to the buyer of bread, that it would save many a shilling, and much indigestion, if he would eat his loaf, not steaming hot, but one day old; and that the loaf should be fairly devoured up, and not thrown into corners and channels where even the pigs are not the better for it. There are creatures of a higher order than pigs who would gladly scrape off the mud and dust for the mouthful within; and who shall say which of us may not have to stoop to the gutter for our loathsome dinner, if we will not take measures to secure ourselves

from being brought to such a pass? If we all spent, day by day, whatever we have, we should be fighting in the gutters for existence; and why should that recklessness be excused in any which would be fatal in all? So let all Birmingham pay down for its loaf, and, however large the loaf, eat up the crusts.

FORGIVE!

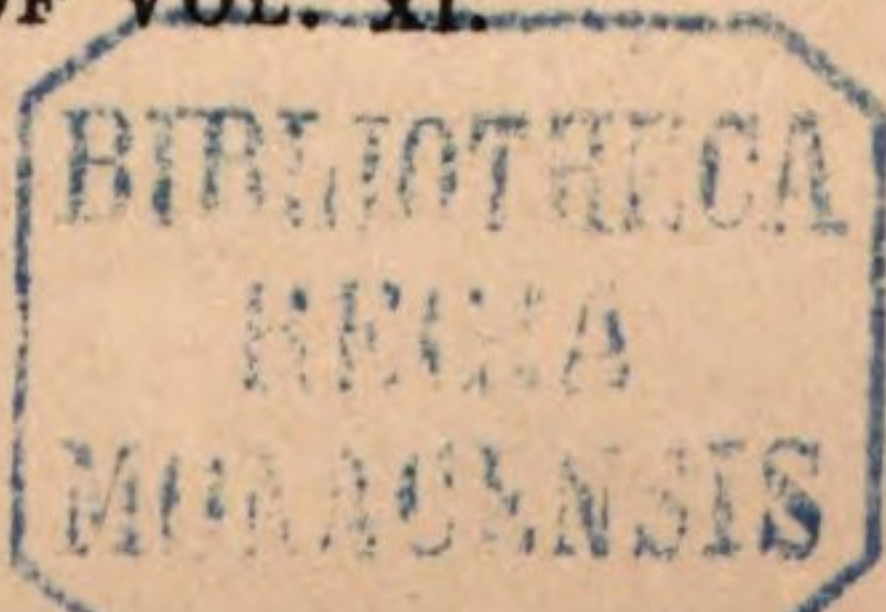
By all the turmoil thou hast felt
 Within thy tempted breast,
 When fiery passions strove to melt
 God's image there impress'd;
 By all the struggles of thy will
 To quell their rebel might,
 Forgive the wretch, who, battling ill,
 Was worsted in the flight!

Thou knowest not what cunning snares
 Were spread beneath his feet;
 What foemen lurk'd in ambush'd lairs
 To intercept retreat;
 The weakness thou wouldst harshly chide
 Should tender pity woo;
 If thou hadst been as sorely tried,
 Thou mightst have fallen, too!

Forgive, and breathe a gentle word
 Of sympathy and love,
 Like that by weeping Mary heard
 From One now throned above;
 And thou mayst win from depths of woe
 The soul that went astray;
 And light anew Hope's faded glow
 To change its night to day.

But harshness raises higher yet
 The waters of despair,
 And weaves around a stronger net
 To mesh the erring there;
 Till, settling heavily, they sink
 Beneath the tumid wave;
 And thou, though standing on the brink,
 Didst stretch no hand to save!

END OF VOL. XI.



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FORGIVENESS

By all the towers thou hast built
 Within thy cramped breast,
 When thy passions strive to break
 That's the time to be patient!

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Then knowest not what coming states
 Were spread beneath his feet;
 What fountains lurk in unbound'd seas,
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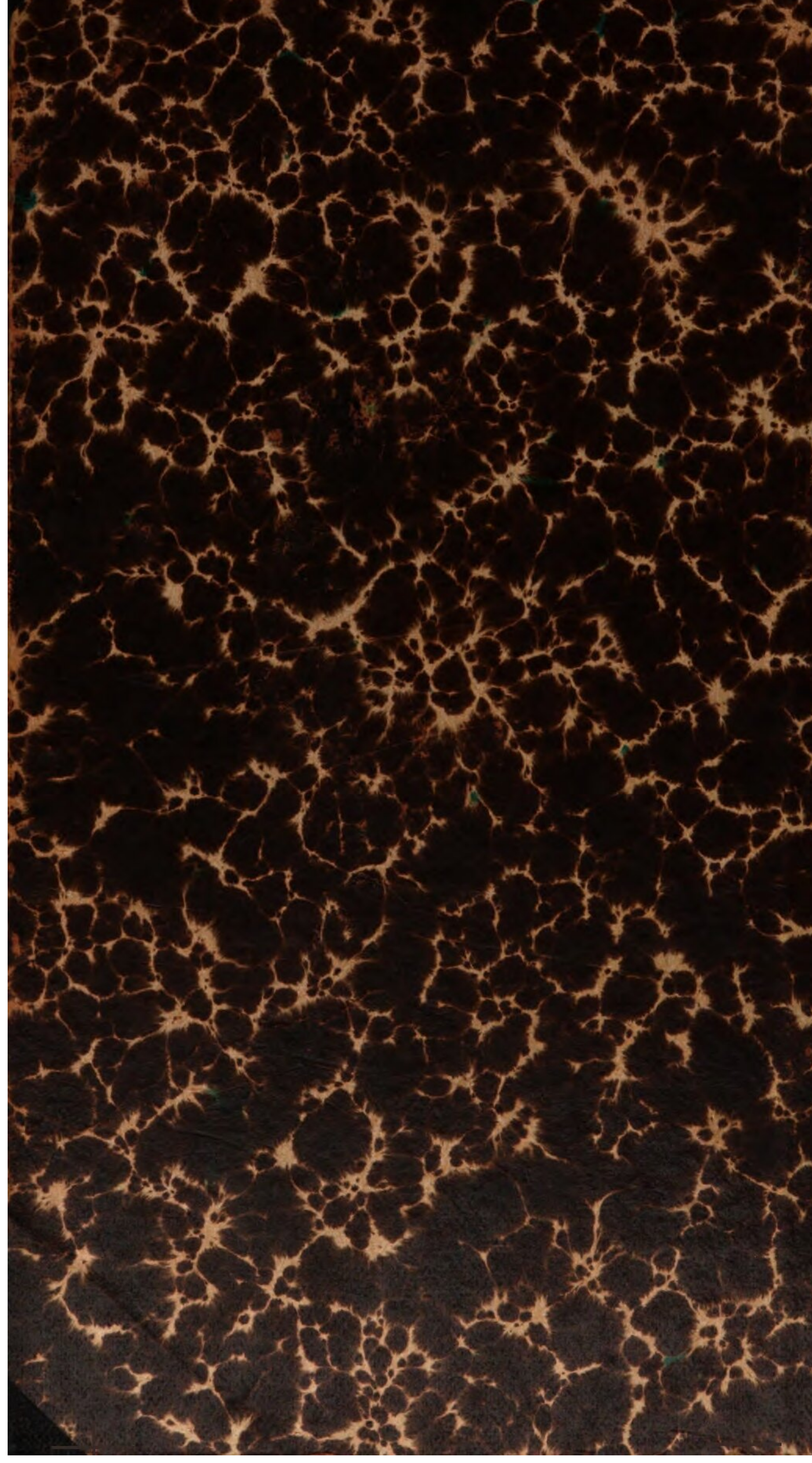
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